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RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

To the Editor of the Panoplist.

SIR,

Should it be your opinion, that the publication of short practical sermons in your miscellany would, if tolerably executed, add any thing to its value; and that the inclosed specimens would not detract from its well earned fame, you will gratify a constant reader by giving them publication. The sermons, which I send you, may probably be considered as a fair representation of what you may hereafter expect, should these be inserted. They are submitted to your disposal with diffidence. B. C. D.

FAMILIAR SERMONS.—NO. I.

ROM. viii, 6.—*But to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

THE inhabitants of the earth are divided into two great classes. To these the word of God attaches appropriate names, and attributes different employments. The line of distinction which is drawn by the apostle, in this chapter, chiefly respects their pursuits, or the governing inclinations of their hearts. The one class are said to be *in the flesh*, the other *in the Spirit*: the one are described as walking *after the flesh*, the other *after the Spirit*. The one mind *the things of the flesh*, but the other *the things of the Spirit*. In the verse from which my text is taken, the same classes are denominated the *carnally minded*, and the *spiritually minded*. The terms, by which they are here distinguished, denote an essential difference in their characters. In a light equally different are they regarded by the Divine Being. While they that are in the flesh cannot please God, there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. To be carnally minded is death: but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. To describe this spiritual mindedness, and to point out some of its happy attendants and fruits, will be the design of the present discourse.

1. The spiritually minded devote their attention to spiritual objects.

They live in heaven while on the earth. The world indeed calls for their attention. Food and raiment, and other temporal blessings, rendered necessary by our connexion with corruptible bodies, are in a subordinate sense the objects of their care. Their attention is not absorbed by these. They use the world; but it is their study to use it as not abusing it. They would make it subservient to their spiritual good. In the midst of their secular engagements,

their supreme attention is still fixed on the realities of an invisible state. Things seen and temporal are before their eyes: but their spiritual vision enables them, through every intervening object, to discern those things which are unseen and eternal. To them but one thing is needful. While multitudes anxiously inquire, "Who will shew us any good?" and fly from one sensual, or worldly, object to another, it is their daily and fervent prayer, that God would lift upon them the light of his countenance. Like Mary, they would sit at the feet of their Lord, and listen to his heavenly conversation. God and Christ and the things of salvation occupy their thoughts. With these they are familiar; to all earthly objects they are comparative strangers. Hence the apostle distinguishes them from their opposites, by saying that they mind the things of the Spirit.

2. Their attention is not only directed to spiritual objects, but in these they find their highest delight.

The beauty and excellence of these objects engage the affections of their hearts. They love to contemplate them, because they correspond with the holy relish of their souls. Although encircled with every worldly gratification, the Psalmist found his chief happiness in spiritual contemplations. Communion with God, and the consolations of his Spirit, filled his heart with unspeakable gladness. In the multitude of his thoughts within him, he assures us, that Divine comforts delighted his soul. On another occasion he says, "O how love I thy law; it is my meditation all the day." "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." The apostle Paul found his choicest comforts in dwelling on the same objects. "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." All the spiritually minded derive their highest happiness from the same source. A view of the character and glory of the invisible God, fills their souls with unutterable delight. "Whom have we in heaven," they cry, "but thee, and there is none upon earth that we desire besides thee." Though the Divine Savior is not seen by his people, with natural eyes, yet believing in him, they love him, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. He is precious to their souls. They gaze with admiration upon his spiritual beauties, and in the appropriating and triumphant language of the spouse exclaim; "this is my beloved, and this is my friend." The glories of the heavenly rest; the promises of the Gospel; the future enlargement and prosperity of the church, and all other spiritual objects, become to them, in succession, sources of the most grateful contemplation. Confined to earthly and temporal objects, their souls languish; but fed with spiritual sustenance, they flourish. Serenity and joy become the natural inmates of their happy minds.

3. The conversation of the spiritually minded is spiritual.

The objects which engage the thoughts, and the affections of the heart, will be the subjects of conversation. Those who mind earthly things, will speak of earthly things: and spiritual things,

for the same reason, will have a prominent place in the conversation of those, who mind spiritual things. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Does the conversation of an individual habitually partake of a spiritual character, there is little hazard of mistake in considering him spiritually minded. Persons of this character love to speak of the Being whose character they admire, and whose laws they delight to obey. They love to speak of their Savior; to ascribe their salvation to his righteousness; and to recommend him to those who have never tasted of his grace. And they rejoice, as they pursue their Christian course, to speak of the perils which they have escaped, the mercies which they have experienced, and the happy region to which they are directing their steps. In short, their conversation is in heaven. It partakes of the spiritual character of the heavenly inhabitants, and of the employments of that holy place. It is a conversation which becometh the Gospel, which flows from a heart warmed with love to Divine things, and chooses to dwell on the objects which the heart approves.

4. The spiritually minded view worldly objects with a constant reference to spiritual things.

The world in which we live, possesses the character, which the disposition of its inhabitants gives it. Were the holy angels to take up their residence in our world, we might almost realize a spiritual world. Worldly objects would be viewed in a spiritual light. They would all lead the mind to holy contemplations. Instead of proving so many weights to bear the affections down to the earth, they would be so many aids to elevate our desires to heaven.

On the same principle, the spiritually minded man converts to a spiritual use the objects, which occupy his attention in the present state. He is not an angel; but, so far as he partakes of the same character, he makes the same use of the world. There are some who, in their reflections and conversation, even degrade spiritual objects to a level with the world. They give a secular character to objects of a heavenly origin. But the spiritually minded man, in a very important sense, takes possession of the world, and converts it to the benefit of his soul. He appropriates to his spiritual good, that which the apostle long since pronounced the property of the Christian. In the enjoyments of the world, he finds excitements to bless and adore the name of the Giver. In its labors, perplexities, and trials, he discovers reasons to prize the heavenly rest; and realizes new incentives to press forward toward the mark. In the calm and sunshine, where the face of the natural world wears a pleasant aspect, he sees the smiles of his heavenly Father, and learns to value and pursue the approbation of his God. In the tempest he deprecates the hiding of God's face and his everlasting displeasure. From the ant and the bee he learns wisdom: and while he feels himself admonished to be actively engaged in performing the business of every day, he is also impressed with the importance of providing not only for the present state,

but for the future world. In short, he would turn all earthly things to some spiritual account. He sees God in every thing. By every thing he is reminded of his duty, and admonished to perform it. All things are his; things present, and things to come;—they are all converted to some spiritual use, and made subservient to the salvation of his soul.

5. The spiritually minded earnestly pursue after spiritual attainments.

They do not consider themselves to have attained, or to be already perfect; but forgetting those things which are behind, they reach forth unto those that are before, and press toward the mark. These, who possess grace only in their hopes and professions, may be satisfied with their present attainments. They are not solicitous to be more holy than is necessary to quiet their consciences, and to allay their fears. But with the spiritually minded it is far otherwise. The more they are under the influence of divine grace, the more they labor to make progress in the Christian life. They cannot be satisfied with only that degree of holiness which entitles them to the name of Christians. They desire not merely the form of godliness, but the power; not to possess real religion in a very low degree, but to go on unto perfection; to wax stronger and stronger. No spiritual attainments satisfy them, while they discover in themselves so much lukewarmness and inactivity; so much worldly mindedness, and in general, so little of the proper spirit of Christianity. Hence, that they may obtain the victory over their lusts, they are habitually maintaining the Christian warfare, and fighting the good fight of faith. They are pressing forward in the Christian race, that they may obtain the incorruptible crown. Are they under the influence of love to God, they strive to love him with a more intense affection. Are they united to the Lord Jesus by a vital faith, they desire to be delivered from all unbelief, and to rest wholly upon him for salvation. They desire to be more humbled for sin; and it is their daily prayer, that they may be holy as God is holy; that their hearts may ever be warmed with his love, and their mouths be filled with his praise.

Let us now consider some of the happy attendants and fruits of this spiritual-mindedness.

“To be spiritually minded,” says the text, “is life and peace.” Though the attendants of a spiritual mind, which are here mentioned, belong in a greater or less degree, to every such mind, it is not to be forgotten, that those, whose hearts and lives are in a peculiar degree spiritual and holy, may also expect to partake of the benefits of such a character to a similar extent. These are the persons, who will have their fruit unto holiness, and their end everlasting life.

1. Spiritual mindedness is, indeed, the very essence of spiritual life. To be carnally minded is to be dead in trespasses and sins. This is the death to which the soul is naturally subject in the present world. The life, which is opposite to this death, and

which consists in holiness, or conformity to God, is not merely the fruit, or attendant of a spiritual mind, but is that disposition of soul by which such a mind is characterized. The scriptures denominate those alive who have been delivered from their carnal minds. "Knowing this," says the apostle, "that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth, we should not serve sin." And again; "Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Christ is called the believer's life, because he has raised him from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. This is the life which the renewed soul experiences. Considered as possessing a spiritual and immortal nature, we can never justly be said to live, until we live to God. This is the proper employment of the soul; that for which it is made. This is the life which the spiritually minded possess. They are quickened, when they were before dead in trespasses and sins.

But spiritual mindedness it may farther be remarked, is not only in its nature, the life of the soul, but it tends to eternal life, and is connected with it by the constitution of the Gospel. Eternal life is the gift of God: but it is his gracious purpose to bestow it on those who have in this world commenced a life of holiness. Of this there can be no room for question; not only as he has promised it to those who are raised from spiritual death by the operation of the Holy Spirit; but as it consists in a greater degree of the same life which is already begun in the soul. The blessedness of heaven is the blessedness of a holy temper increased and perpetuated. They that are holy will be holy still.

2. *Peace* is the other attendant and fruit of a spiritual mind.

The peace of which we shall more particularly speak, is that which is connected with religion in the present world: though it is equally correct, that the truly humble and pious will inherit everlasting peace. Even here, the spiritually minded enjoy that peace of God, which passeth all understanding. While the wicked are wholly destitute of this fruit of holiness, and their souls are continually fluctuating like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, true Christians are enabled to stay themselves upon God, and to find peace. The counsel of Eliphaz to Job implies, that peace is the natural consequence of religion. "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace." "The Lord will bless his people with peace," says the Psalmist. And again, "Great peace have they that love thy law." "The kingdom of God," says an apostle, "is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." The same apostle enumerates this among the fruits of the Spirit. Peace is included by the Savior himself in the inventory of blessings which he encouraged his disciples to expect of him at his departure. "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." And when he was about to leave them, this was the legacy which he bequeathed to them for their consolation. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I

I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." The peace of which we are speaking arises from reconciliation to God. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Sin has made an awful separation between God and the souls of men. It has filled their hearts with enmity against their Maker, and exposed the subjects of it to his everlasting displeasure. But when any become reconciled to God through the death of his Son, they are brought into a state of peace. They are reconciled to God, and God is reconciled to them. Then it is they come into possession of peace of conscience, that sunshine of the soul which arises from a sense of cancelled guilt. The Lord Jesus has become their peace, and assures them, that there is no condemnation to those who are in him, and who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Peace from the turbulence and restlessness of their passions, is also a blessing, which the spiritually minded enjoy. Divine grace has restrained their raging appetites, so that they can now cheerfully deny themselves. A better good than they have before pursued, engages the attention of their souls. A holy relish for spiritual objects makes all sensual enjoyments vain and insipid. Thus the spiritually minded, amidst all the confusion of the world, the numberless perplexities with which they meet, and even their own imperfections, while they are enabled to stay themselves upon God, and to live a holy life, find peace within, a peace which is unspeakable, and with which no stranger can possibly intermeddle.

Let me now apply this subject to persons of every character, and, by the considerations suggested, endeavor to persuade all to possess and cultivate that spiritual mind, which both implies and produces life and peace. To be spiritually minded, we have seen, is to be possessed of life; of life in the highest sense, the life of the soul. By nature we are destitute of life. We are dead in sins. In this way we become possessed of a vital principle. In this way only can we live to any good purpose. In no other way can we live to God, and answer the great object of our existence. Without this life, we are worse than lost to the world, we are dead while we live. Remaining in such a state, we are, also, destitute of peace. There is no peace to the wicked. God, our consciences, and our passions, are all armed against us. While those who have been renewed, in the temper of their minds, possess a joy and peace in believing, which the world can neither give nor take away, we are wholly destitute of these spiritual graces. If we flatter ourselves that our minds are at rest, it is the torpor of moral death, which has seized upon us. Our hearts are not reconciled to God; we have no delightful sense of pardoning mercy; nor has the turbulence of our passions ever been hushed into a calm. But this is not all. It must not be concealed, that if we are not spiritually minded, we are carnally minded. We possess that mind which is enmity against God, and the fruit of which is death. To be carnally minded is death,

as it constitutes the very essence of spiritual death, and is connected with eternal death by the irrevocable appointment of God. Let us then cultivate that spiritual mind, of which I have been speaking. Let us put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

The subject may also be presented to the serious consideration of Christians. It is not to be supposed, my brethren, that you are wholly destitute of that life which spiritual mindedness implies; or indeed, of that peace which it warrants and produces. Still, it may not be improper to urge you to become possessed of a greater degree of that holy principle. The more spiritual are your views and affections, the higher in ordinary cases will rise your joy and peace in believing. Are the consolations of God small with you? It is because your affections are grovelling and sensual. Such is not the inheritance of those who live near to God. The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, fills their minds with a holy ecstasy. They drink of the river of God's pleasure, and their souls are daily satisfied with marrow and fatness. No storms or tempests of adversity can essentially disturb, much less destroy, their tranquillity. Would you possess their joy, you must possess their spirituality. You must seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. All other pursuits must yield to that of religion. You must press forward in the divine life, and give all diligence to make your calling and election sure. If you wait upon the Lord by humble and fervent prayer, and by a careful attendance on the institutions and ordinances of the Gospel, you will renew your strength. All obstacles in the way of your advancement will vanish. Joy and gladness will daily attend your course while you live, and your end will be peace. Cultivate then a spiritual mind. Be continually pressing forward after new attainments. And do not allow yourselves to be satisfied with any progress which you make, until every spiritual enemy is vanquished, and every affection of your hearts is consecrated to the service of God.

For the Panoplist.

THEOLOGICAL REMARKS.—NO. II.

On prevailing errors respecting the character of Christ:

THE following remarks are designed to afford a concise illustration of the mode of reasoning, adopted by those, who reject the Savior's divinity. They all agree in calling themselves, and in being called by others, Unitarians. The term Unitarian, as used in these remarks, embraces all who have turned aside from the orthodox belief respecting the character of Christ. The writer of these remarks is a firm believer in the divinity of his Savior; and he looks upon those who deny his divinity, as in a dangerous error. It is not his present object, however, to trace out the difference

to be found in their views respecting the Savior's character; but to shew in what their errors consist, and to reduce them all to two classes.

The character of Christ has a complexness, which does not belong to any other character. It is different from any other character in the universe. All errors respecting it originate in attempting to divest it of this peculiarity. Those, which have existed in some places in New-England, are *Socinian* or *Arian* errors.

I shall consider both of these.

I. The error of Socinians consists primarily in the assumption, *that Christ is nothing more than a man*. In reasoning with Trinitarians, therefore, they collect the evidence of his humanity, and urge it in disproof of his divinity. Did their opponents deny his humanity, this reasoning, against such denial, would be conclusive: evidently, however, his humanity is not the point in dispute. Their opponents admit his humanity, and they admit too all this evidence, in its full extent. The reasoning of Socinians, then, is of no force, except on the above-named assumption. Their opponents might, with equal propriety, allege the evidence of his divinity in disproof of his humanity. Their reasoning, in this case, would be as convincing, as that of Socinians in the other; in both cases, however, it is unscriptural, because it renders one part of the Bible subversive of another. We deny, then, the validity of the reasoning of Socinians; and call on them for proof, *that Christ is nothing more than man*. They, in return, reason from the scriptural evidence of the Divine Unity. But this reasoning is not to the point; because, in the first place, their opponents believe in the Divine Unity, and admit all this evidence in its full import; and secondly, their opponents are ready to shew, that the Scriptures uniformly assert *that Unity*, in distinction from the idols of the Heathen. Socinians, then, must shew, that Christ was ranked with those idols; or, in other words, that he is a different and distinct Being from the true God; or their argument is not pertinent to the subject. Foiled in this attempt, their last resort is to bold assertion. "Christ is a real man; it is, therefore, impossible that he should be more than man." Let every reflecting reader fix his eye on this point;—this bold assertion: it forms the pivot, on which the whole Socinian theory turns.

II. The Arian hypothesis is, that Christ, a super-angelic being, assumed and animated a human body, without a human soul. All, who deny him a full equality of perfection with the Father, and yet rank him above man, may be called Arians. Unitarians, then, who do not accede to the Socinian hypothesis, must fall within the limits of the Arian.

Some, however, consider themselves on better ground. I shall briefly notice the peculiarities of this class, as they have been expressed in a publication under the name of Bible News. This volume has been read in many places, and has uniformly been recommended even by those Unitarians who acknowledge its defects. This is the only publication, issued from any press in New-England,

which, to my knowledge, contains any thing like a theory. The Unitarian publications, in general, seem to be made with a design to subvert established principles, without substituting any in their room. This volume, therefore, is entitled to some examination. The title of it excites curiosity, and leads us to expect something new. "Bible News!" The Bible is an old book. Possibly its doctrines may receive new illustrations; but it is hardly to be expected, that any new truths have recently been discovered. What then are we to understand by BIBLE NEWS? What does this volume contain? It contains an old theory!—a theory advanced many centuries ago, and long since exploded. This old theory is brought forward in a new form, and recommended under the title of BIBLE NEWS. Had the author been more extensively read in ecclesiastical history, it is possible he would have chosen a different title. To my mind the theory contained in this volume, respecting the character of Christ, carries absurdity on the face of it. It proceeds on the supposition, that there is a strict analogy between natural and spiritual things, and between the divine existence and human existence. On this supposition, it goes to establish the filiation of Christ by natural generation. It is concisely this: "Christ is the Son of God by real generation, in the same sense in which Isaac was the Son of Abraham." The reasoning in support of this position, derives its whole force from the literal import of the terms applied to Christ. Such are the following: 'Son of God—well beloved Son—only begotten—first born,' &c. These very terms are often used metaphorically in the Bible. They may be so used, therefore, in their application to Christ. The reasoning, which is founded on their literal import, is not conclusive unless it be shewn, that these terms must be understood literally, when applied to Christ. But the author has not shewn this, neither can it be shewn; of course, his theory is unsupported. Did it, however, rest on better reasoning, it would still be unsound. To be consistent, the author must maintain the monstrous error of the Anthropomorphites,* and the absurdity, that Christ is a *derived* self-existent, a *derived* independent, eternal and immutable Being. In disavowing these results, and yet attempting to preserve an appearance of consistency, he introduces a principle, by which he divests the Supreme Being of every attribute, which, in our minds, can possibly distinguish him from a holy angel or holy man. To satisfy every reader that this author, and all Unitarians who agree with him, are in reality on the Arian hypothesis, I will briefly trace out the difference between him and Arians.

This difference consists in a supposed distinction between *derivation* and *creation*. According to the theory in question, since Christ derived his nature, as the Son of God, from the uncreated

* These were a small religious sect of the tenth century. They derived their name from their absurd notion concerning the Supreme Being. They believed him "to be clothed with a human form, and to be seated like an earthly monarch on a throne of gold." Mosheim, vol. ii, p. 421.

nature of the Father, he is an uncreated Being. In consequence of this derivation, the author considers Christ as equal in essence with the Father, yet inferior in attributes;—whereas the Arians consider him inferior both in essence and attributes;—consequently the difference ultimately respects the essence of Christ in distinction from his attributes. But the author justly acknowledges, that we know nothing of any being, except from his attributes: by his own concession, then, the difference between him and Arians is unintelligible: yet the boasted excellence of his theory is “freedom from mystery.”

But is not the idea of dependence alike inseparable from *derivation* and *creation*? Adam was a *created*, Seth a *derived* being; yet one was as dependent for existence as the other. Indeed they were equally dependent, and equally effects of divine power; the exercise of which power was in the former case immediate, in the latter mediate; the difference then is merely circumstantial, and makes no important distinction in the characters of the two beings.

But is not the proposition, that Christ is an uncreated derived being, absurd? The idea of derivation implies that he began to exist. Is he uncreated? then he has always existed! And if he has always existed, he must be self-existent and eternal! but the author maintains, that he is neither self-existent, nor eternal, yet uncreated! How is the fact that he exists to be accounted for? Why by *derivation*!* It is believed, that the author of Bible News, is not treated unkindly in being called an Arian; for most evidently he does not exalt the character of Christ, on his scheme, more than Arians can on theirs, and in point of consistency of theory he sinks far below them.

The Arian hypothesis is grounded on those texts of Scripture, which teach the pre-existence and superangelic dignity of Christ. In making these the sole basis of their theory, they necessarily pervert two other numerous classes of texts; the one affording evidence that he was a real man, and the other that he is truly God. Like the Socinians, they assume the point, that the character of Christ has no peculiar *complexness*. On this assumption, both classes reject much scriptural evidence respecting him. The difference between them consists in their rejecting different parts of that evidence. Their two hypotheses correspond with the evidence on which they are respectively grounded: yet the unavoidable consequence of both is disrespect for the sacred writers, and an unjustifiable construction of scriptural language.

The Bible is a revelation from heaven. All, who admit its origin, are bound to submit to its authority. The truths contained in it form a perfect whole; and are so connected, that a rejection of one may lead to a disbelief of the whole. From the moment in which the Christian theologian appeals from the authority of

* If the author of Bible News can affix any meaning to this term, by which he may possibly screen himself from palpable absurdity, he will confer a favor on some, who have read his volume. Until this is done, he must be content with a seat among Arians; without equal claims with them to consistency.

his Bible, his compass is lost, and he finds no polar star to direct his course. The very appeal is an impeachment of divine wisdom in revealing things either useless, or absurd. Are not Socinians and Arians virtually chargeable with such an appeal? Their religious belief is precisely the same it would be, were large portions of the Bible erased! These parts, then, must appear to them either absurd, or unintelligible; consequently all it contains, different from their belief, is either interpolated, corrupted, or to be understood differently from its obvious meaning.

But all the prominent doctrines of the Bible are so connected with the character of Christ, that an error respecting that will lead to erroneous views of the whole Gospel. The history of the progress of Unitarianism contains incontrovertible evidence of this fact. Its tendency has been to unsettle religious belief and to involve Unitarians in perplexity and doubt. They have been professedly inquiring after truth, yet it has always lain beyond them—though “ever learning,” they have not yet been able, themselves being judges, to come to the knowledge of it. Accordingly, from the Bible their defection has been to Arianism; from Arianism to Socinianism; and from Socinianism to Infidelity. Dr. Priestly, the oracle of many modern Unitarians, affords an exemplification of the tendency of their error. After he had passed through all the gradations of change from Calvinism to Socinianism, and had become a Socinian of the lowest class, he acknowledged himself unsettled in his religious belief. We know not precisely how far Unitarians in New-England have in general descended; but we believe them generally unsettled in their creed; and we maintain that their error, if followed out in its legitimate consequences, will land them in Infidelity.

To be consistent, neither Socinians nor Arians can hold, in any proper sense, to the doctrines of atonement, moral depravity, and special divine influence; to the goodness and equity of the moral law; our obligations to obey this law, and the eternity of future punishment. Their views of these doctrines will rise or fall with their belief respecting the character of Christ.

The great object of both classes is to exclude mystery from the Bible. Suppose it possible; what good would result. The very constitution of moral beings renders mystery indispensable to their continued happiness!—As such beings we can never rest satisfied with any given attainment in knowledge or holiness; we infer that this is the fact in respect to all moral beings. How unwise, then, as well as irreverent, is the attempt to divest the subjects of the Bible of their appropriate character, and to reduce them to our finite comprehension!

On the contrary, how happy is it for us, that God should reveal truths infinitely interesting, yet more or less mysterious, and which require of us, in this world, the exercise of faith and humility. Those very subjects, which now humble the proud intellect, and baffle the inquisitive mind, may become, at some future period of our existence, fruitful sources of enjoyment. The character of

Christ, for example, may for ever remain incomprehensible; yet it will be a glorious theme of contemplation to all holy intelligences; and the new wonders and resplendent glories, which it may continue for ever to disclose to their enraptured vision, will heighten their enjoyment and swell their notes of praise. "Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." O. P.

MISCELLANEOUS.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE REV. COTTON MATHER.

(Copied for the Panoplist, and continued from vol. xii, p. 367.)

LORD'S DAY, March 30, 1712. *Second Good Devised:* My sick son Increase is on a way of hopeful recovery from his fever. O that the sickness of the lad may be sanctified unto him, to bring him home unto God. I must cry mightily to God for this blessing. But I must also discourse unto the child, in the most exquisite and engaging manner that I can, upon it; and I would oblige him, as soon as he can, to write down the resolutions of piety, which he takes up, on this occasion.

3. G. D. The minister of Watertown-farms is my kinsman. I will give him all the assistance in his studies that I can devise. I will supply his reading with the best things that I can afford him. I will direct the discharge of his ministry as well as I can.

4. G. D. I foresee a manifold service to be done unto the interests of piety, and all good interests whatsoever, by making a collection of the *evil customs*, which are used in any parts of the country, and a proposal of —* for the cure of them:—and adjoin the same unto a discourse about evil customs: and publish those things, and scatter them in all the towns of these colonies.—I would proceed upon this design.

5. G. D. There are many good things, which I would set forward among the ministers of the town, with whom I am associated: but one among the rest is this: I have thoughts of publishing a book of *Pastoral Desires*; expressing the desirable things, which a faithful minister will wish to see among his people. I would engage them to accompany this book with their subscribed approbation, and a recommendation of it to all the churches in the country. There may be many good consequences of such an action.

6. G. D. There are some desolate and afflicted persons at *Charlestown*, for the relief of whose various necessities I am called to do what I can: and a gentlewoman at *Salem*, who is my very valuable friend, bearing of the death of her son abroad, I will with my letters and books immediately endeavor to assist her good conduct, on this distressing occasion.

* The word used here is illegible

7. G. D. If I have an occasion to inflict a punishment of any sort upon an offender; and, very particularly, if I must dispense a blow unto an offending servant, I would make it an occasion for me exceedingly to find out, and confess, and bewail before the Lord, what offences in my own heart and life I can be led hereby to think upon, and seek the pardon of, through the blood of the great sacrifice, by whose stripes I am healed.

1. G. D.* The General Assembly has made a law to restrain abuses of the Lord's day evening. It might be a sensible and seasonable service unto my flock, if, on this occasion, I preach a sermon unto them, not only about the motives, but about the methods, for spending that evening in the exercises of piety. I may excite other ministers to do the like.

2. G. D. The description, which I have newly given to the public, of the virtuous and gracious women, who have been the ornaments of their country, I will oblige my three daughters to transcribe into their blank books, and to study it. And I will make it the subject of my conferences with them.

4. G. D. I have in my design several great works for the kingdom of my dear Savior. It would be no indiscretion for me to have my blank books prepared for each of them; that so I may occasionally, from time to time, lodge in them such materials, as may occur to me in my reading and thinking, and increase my stock to work upon, if I may live to proceed in the works with a closer application.

5. G. D. There has been a grievous confusion at *Medford*. There is a prospect of putting a period unto it, if a sum of twenty pounds can be advanced for the satisfaction of one obstreperous person there. I would not only bear my own part of the contribution, but also stir up others; that so that poor people may have the ordinances of the Gospel settled among them.†

6. G. D. There is an aged person in a necessitous condition and blind, whose necessities I would inquire into and have accommodated.

7. G. D. It is likely to be a dreadful time, not only in Great Britain, but here also; a time of sad changes and evils. I would apply my mind, with more than ordinary application unto the thoughts and the methods of piety, which I am to take, that I may be accounted worthy to escape the evils of this time.

1. G. D. I will urgently press upon my hearers the consideration of these two questions; and would conclude my next sermon with pressing of them. 1. What have I left undone, the omission whereof would make my death uneasy to me, if I were now to die immediately? 2. If I were immediately to appear before the judgment seat of God, what plea have I, and what hope for the blessedness of the righteous to be bestowed upon me? And I will, with all

* The venerable writer appears generally to have omitted dates; and to have begun a new series of *good devices*, whenever convenience required.

† From a paragraph written at this time, it would appear, that vigorous exertions were making at *Newbury* to establish the interest of the Episcopal church there. We mention it as a historical fact merely.

possible cogency, oblige my children to think seriously on those two most awful questions.

3. G. D. In the family of my dear, courteous, hearty kinsman, Mr. C., where I am intimately acquainted, and frequently and splendidly entertained, there are many services, to be done for the souls of old and young. I need not insert here the particular services I may design; but I shall be perpetually contriving what I may do for them, according to their several circumstances—and never go near them, without some explicit contrivance to do good among them.

4. G. D. I would make the present aspect of the times an engine to serve the cause of piety. I would inculcate the maxims and methods of piety with powerful considerations, drawn from the times into which we are fallen. These considerations I would exhibit and inculcate, not only on the Lord's days, but in my lectures; and both in my prayers and my sermons. I may contribute much unto the goodness and the wisdom of this whole people, by my being awake on this occasion.

5. G. D. In the *Society for the Suppression of Disorders*, I would move some especial methods to preserve and strengthen the *Religion of the Sabbath*.

6. G. D. Some children in my neighborhood are falling into a way of wickedness, for which they must have speedy correction, and from which a speedy recovery. I must take some care about them.

7. G. D. Among the occasions for expressions of piety and thankfulness, I would most affectionately take notice of one that often occurs to me, in the mean employments wherein I see many other people occupied. When I see those whose business it is to dig in the earth, to cleanse the kennels, to sweep the chimneys, to drive the wheel-barrows, and to carry burdens, or the like things of a very low degree; I would have my heart raised in praises and wonders for the sovereign grace of God, which has distinguished me with much higher and nobler employments; indeed the best of all employments. I would also lift up a prayer for the neighbors, whom I see more meanly employed, that God would help them to do what they do out of obedience unto him, and also bestow upon them some suitable blessing, which I may be led, from the circumstances of what I see them doing, to think upon.

2. G. D. My children, that have begun to handle their pens, I will oblige to write in answer to that question: What should be the conduct of baptized children? What is the duty their baptism does oblige them to? From their own written answer to this question, I will take occasion in the most lively manner to inculcate the admonitions of piety upon them.

3. G. D. To my aged mother I must present my *Awakening Thoughts on the Sleep of Death*, and the description of virtuous aged women, which is in the preface; and accompany the same with agreeable passages of conversation.

4. G. D. I would wade as far as I can, in the matter of gathering a church at *Rhode-Island*, and forward it, if it be possible.

5. G. D. Some very pious, generous, liberal people in my neighborhood have lately received a mercy in their family by the safe return of an only son from sea. I would put them upon doing some special service for Christ, as an expression of their gratitude for such a mercy.

6. G. D. I think I may do well to take a list of souls in my flock, whom I know, or hear, or fear, to be remarkably ensnared in evil courses, and suitably and solemnly apply myself, or procure convenient applications of others to be made unto them, that they may, if possible, be recovered.

[April 25, 1712. The writer describes a day of fasting, which he kept, the account of which is too long to be inserted here. Besides the usual reasons for fasting he had "some special errands" to the throne of grace. One was in reference to a difficulty in his congregation, in consequence of altering their meeting-house; a thing, which is a frequent occasion of parish troubles in these days. Another was, to pray for a certain unprincipled man, who had made Mr. M. and his intimate friend Mr. Bromfield, objects of malice and slander. In this part of the exercises Mr. B. united, in obedience to our Savior's direction: *If two of you agree, &c.* "We first forgave him," says the writer, "and renounced with abhorrence all thoughts of a personal revenge upon him. We asked the Lord also to forgive him, and make him a new creature, and bring him to the temper and actions of goodness."]

7. G. D. I still find, that notwithstanding the thoughtful provision I have made of methods to employ the little interstices of my time unto the best of purposes, yet I am still unhappy with many minutes, wherein my mind lies wholly fallow, and is not employed in any acknowledgment of God, and of his glorious truths. I would therefore become furnished with proper subjects, and make it my practice, when I find myself in danger of idle minutes, to form a meditation on one or other of the subjects, in such a method as I anciently prescribed for carrying on the exercise of meditation.

1. G. D. A pious young man, belonging to our church, and my brother-in-law, (*Peter Oliver*,) died this morning. A few hours before he died, he once and again importuned me, that I would earnestly exhort the young people of the place to maintain the religion of the closet, unto which, he said, through the favor of God he had not been himself a stranger; but had found unspeakable advantage and comfort in it. For me to take this advantage may be a great service to the interests of piety in the neighborhood; and I propose, with the help of heaven, on the next Lord's day, to do it.

Ap. 27. Lord's day. Besides the other intentions of my being at the table of the Lord, I pursued more particularly the two following errands.

The first was, that with every other grace of the Holy Spirit, I may especially receive that grace of a heart very attentive to the worship of God, when I am to be engaged in it.

The second was, that if there be any one discriminating point, which may keep up in me the character of a tare in the field of the Lord, he would discover it unto me, and deliver me from it.

2. G. D. My children are sensibly affected with the death of their uncle, in whose house, which was near mine, they were daily conversant. His dying desire to have the prayer of the closet recommended unto young people gave me a notable engine to inculcate this grand exercise of religion, and vehicle of all good, upon them. I will improve it accordingly.

3. G. D. To my aged aunt, at *Northampton*, I would send my character of the virtuous and excellent women in the preface to the book more than once already mentioned; and some other engines of piety to ripen her for the heavenly world.

4. G. D. I would write unto the distressed church at *Woodbridge* my directions about supplying themselves with a desirable minister.

5. G. D. I must renew my proposal for some good men to walk the streets at evenings, where the children are at play, and observe the language of the children, and take a proper notice of the children, who use any wicked language; and, if it be possible, reform their wickedness. It grows at such a rate, that it is high time something were done for the suppression of it.

6. G. D. There is a poor person in my neighborhood, whom I would assist by sending in something to furnish her for the beginning of house-keeping. I suppose the great quantity of wine made by our Savior for the new married couple at *Cana*, was, that they might sell some of it, for the assistance of their expenses, at their beginning of house-keeping.

1. G. D. I have in my view several hopeful essays to bespeak and promote early piety among the young people of the flock; and I would, with much supplication to heaven for directions and assistance therein, apply myself unto them.

2. G. D. There are some exercises of religion in my family which my wife is capable of upholding and cherishing; especially on the Saturday evenings, and the Lord's day noons and evenings; and I would prevail with her to do her part in carrying my family to God by such pious exercises.

3. G. D. I have some kindred at *New-Haven*, of whom I would this day take a particular notice, with sending books of piety unto them.

4. G. D. It may have a tendency further to advance piety in the country, if I give the public, in the way of the press, the sermon I have newly preached, at the desire of my deceased brother-in-law.

6. G. D. There is a hopeful young man, proposed for an usher in the grammar-school in this town; for whom it would be a considerable kindness, if I could prevail with some family of good fashion to give him his board and entertain him for the exercises of religion with which he would accommodate them.

7. G. D. For the recovery of my impaired health I must now and then take a horse, and ride a few miles out of town. I would make this an opportunity of acknowledging my dear Savior, as the Lord of my health and of all the creatures that serve me; and of

enriching the minds of the gentlemen, who accompany me on these little excursions, with as many admonitions of piety, and useful conversation, as may be.

[The writer mentions the publication of his treatise, entitled *Pastoral Desires*, which he had projected some time before, and records his intention of sending it, 'as fast as he could, into every town in the country.']

4. G. D. It may be a service to the interests of religion, and a thing well-becoming a minister of God, if I should give the town a lecture, to encourage that good work of building, which they are now much upon; and direct and bespeak the acknowledgments wherewith God is to be glorified in it.

5. G. D. I would not only preach to the societies of young people, the reason they have to beware of being *another generation*; but I would also very particularly and importunately set before them the points of their danger. And, if I can get opportunity, I would extend these admonitions further throughout the country.

7. G. D. I would exceedingly improve in two points of piety, relating to the government of my thoughts: The one is, that, as often as I find any ill thought shaping in my mind, I will rebuke it, and destroy it with a good one; and this as much as may be directly opposed to the ill thought which would have ensnared me. The other is, that I will frequently reflect on the condition and employment of my mind; and if I perceive no tendency to a good thought in the operations of it, I will be angry with myself, and labor to form some good thoughts immediately. The apprehension of having my heart always under the view of the glorious God, and the thoughts thereof afar off known unto Him, exceedingly quickens me in these exercises of piety. And the thoughts, which I therein fly unto, shall ordinarily be put into the form of an address unto the Lord, who considers my meditation.

2. G. D. Among the returns, which I would make to the glorious Lord, for his blessings on my family, I would set myself, with more than ordinary cogency, to have all domestic incumbrances and avocations over, every Saturday evening long before it be dark, that so the whole family may have nothing to do, but apply themselves to devotional exercises, and that the Lord's day may be duly prepared for.

4. G. D. The time draws near for the anniversary convention of our ministers. I would set myself to contrive the most edifying entertainment for them. I would entertain them with such subjects of discourse, as may be for the general advantage. I would set forward such things among them as all the country may fare the better for.

One thing that I propose to exhibit unto them is, a catalogue of *evil customs*, which begin to appear in the country, and proper *methods* to discourage them. I would ask them to concur in exhibiting it unto the country; and to complete it by their own communications for that purpose.

5. G. D. Fresh occasions occur for me to animate a minister in the vicinity to write a brief treatise, which he has been disposed and preparing to write, in the defence of our ordination.

6. G. D. There is a religious and well disposed candidate of the ministry, who has met with discouragements and is out of employment. I would immediately apply myself to find some good employment for him.

Friday, May 23, 1712. I set apart this day for prayer, with fasting before the Lord, on such occasions as employed me this day a month ago; and as then, so now, I had my pious friend Mr. Bromfield with me, in some of the sacrifices.

7. G. D. I am desirous to take a catalogue of the comforts, which I do at this time enjoy; and employ this thought upon each of them: What special service to my dear Savior does this favor of his unto me most agreeably call me to? And the comforts that may in the time to come arrive unto me, I would entertain with the like thoughts.

1. G. D. Having entered upon the work of catechising, and this with very encouraging circumstances, I find beginning to appear already a world of precious opportunities to do good among the young ones in the neighborhood. I would cry to heaven for assistance and use all possible contrivance and diligence, in cultivating these opportunities. And particularly I would proceed now to think on the best methods, that the daughters of Zion may come into them.*

(To be continued.)

OUR SAVIOR'S AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

Mr. Editor,

By inserting the following Questions, in your useful magazine, you will gratify at least one of your constant readers.

1. Was the agonizing distress, which our Savior felt in the garden, and which caused blood to flow so copiously from his body, the cup, which he earnestly and repeatedly prayed, (though with submission,) might pass from him?

2. Was the sorrow, which he then felt, and which he apprehended would prove fatal, occasioned by an overbearing sense of divine wrath for sin, impressed upon his soul by the hand of God himself?

3. If this was any part of his suffering, by which he was making atonement for the sins of men, could he pray, that that cup might pass from him, unless he shrunk back from that work, on which he came into the world? or could he say, I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened, till it be accomplished?

* On being further conversant with the Diary we find the author's practice to have been to enter one good devised every day, commencing with Saturday, numbering them in order till the next Friday inclusive. The two following paragraphs, having been omitted in their proper place, are inserted here.

March, 1712. 5. G. D. There are points of history to be collected and preserved, relating to the conduct of our public affairs. I will desire a worthy friend of mine to do the public the service of making such a collection.

6. G. D. There is a poor family at Wenham, for whom I would not only procure supplies from some wealthy persons related unto them in my neighborhood; but also myself make additions to them.

4. Will it not appear, as if Christ the Redeemer was even wishing to be released from his engagements, as the Savior of lost men, if the agony, which he at that time felt, was caused by the foresight of sufferings, which were still to come, and which he knew would be brought upon him, by the hands of wicked men?

5. Was it a speedy death which he feared, as the consequence of that agonizing distress, which he then felt, and which caused him to exclaim, "my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death?" or was it that scene of heartfelt sufferings, which he foresaw, and quietly consented to undergo?

6. Was an angel sent to strengthen him to endure and to carry him through his present agony, or his subsequent distress?

It is earnestly desired, that some able divine would attend to these questions, and give them a clear and full answer, in the *Panoplist*.

QUERIST.

For the *Panoplist*.

A PLAN FOR THE MORAL AND RELIGIOUS IMPROVEMENT OF CHILDREN.

MR. EDITOR,

Having been requested, by a number of your readers, to give an account of the system which has been adopted, in the place of my residence, for the moral and religious improvement of children, I send you the following communication: if you think it will be useful, you are at liberty to publish it.

IN the spring of 1814 a Society, consisting of about seventy men, was formed for **DOING GOOD**.

In the spring of 1815 a Branch Society was formed, consisting of about one hundred and fifty women. This Society have in view a number of objects; one of which is, the Moral and Religious Improvement of Children. For this, and other purposes, they contribute about one hundred and fifty dollars a year.

The concerns of the Society are conducted by a Standing Committee, consisting of twelve men, who are chosen annually. They meet once in three months to devise ways and means of accomplishing the objects of the Society. The Society have an annual meeting; when they unite in religious exercises, and a discourse is delivered by some person previously appointed for that purpose. The Standing Committee then report their proceedings, during the past year, and the success which has attended them.

In the spring of 1816 another Branch Society was formed, consisting of between two and three hundred children. The exclusive object of this Branch, is to furnish the heathen with Bibles. Every child who daily reads the Bible himself, or, if he is not old enough to read, who hears it read by others, and endeavors to understand and obey it; and who annually contributes, to send it to the heathen, is a member. The particular sum, to be contributed, is left, entirely, to the discretion of each individual.

At the opening of the schools, in 1816, each teacher was furnished with a blank book, ruled with eight columns. On the first column was

to be written the name of each scholar;—on the second, his age;—on the third, the number of times he had been at the head of his class at the last spelling for the day;—on the fourth, the number of books which he had taken from the Library;* on the fifth, the number of verses of Hymns, and Divine Songs, which he had learned;—on the sixth, the number of answers which he had learned of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism;—on the seventh the number of verses which he had learned of the Bible; and on the eighth, the number of cents, which, in the course of one year, he had given to the Bible Society. When any scholar had, in the course of the week, saved any thing for the heathen, he was allowed, on Saturday, when he took a book from the Library, to hand it to the teacher; and the sum was recorded against his name in the eighth column, as a donation of his, to the Bible Society.

After the scholars were made acquainted with the whole system, they were informed, that the Committee, at the close, would examine the schools, and inspect the books: when, at one view, they would see how many children had attended school—what was their age;—how many times each scholar had been at the head of his class;—how many books he had taken from the Library;† how many verses of Hymns and Divine Songs, he had learned;—how many answers of the Catechism—how many verses of the Bible; and how many cents he had given to the Bible Society.

The object of the Bible Society interested the children exceedingly. You might see tears of compassion trickle down many eyes, as they heard of the destitute state of the heathen; and their hearts beat high, with desires to send them the Bible. The great question was, *How shall we get money to give?*

The Committee replied, that almost every one would, in the course of the year, receive a few cents from his parents, or friends, and that they might save one quarter, or one half, more, or less, as they saw fit, of these: and that probably many parents would give them more, when they found that they devoted it to so good an object.

The Committee then pointed out four ways in which they might earn something for this object. They informed them that each scholar, who should be at the head of his class, more than six times, should be considered as earning six cents: which should be

* This Library was established in 1815, by the Standing Committee of the Society for Doing Good. After procuring a large quantity of Books, suitable for children, they divided them into as many parcels as there are schools in the place; and took one parcel, enclosed in a trunk, to each school. The teacher was appointed librarian. All children, whose conduct and improvement met the approbation of the teacher, were allowed to take a book from the library every Saturday. The book was charged to them, and the next Saturday they were required to return it: and if their conduct, during the week, had been good, they were allowed to take out another.

† In the course of six months, the whole, taken together, read more than thirty thousand pages, learned more than two hundred Hymns, and many select portions of Scripture: and notwithstanding their unusual attention to reading, &c. their improvement in the various branches of learning, was much greater than had been witnessed before.

‡ This would show, not only how much he had read, but also what had been his behavior: as no one was allowed to take out books, unless he behaved well.

paid, for him, out of the Treasury of the Society for Doing Good; and be recorded in the eighth column, against his name, as a donation of his to the Bible Society; and that the scholar who should read the most books should in the same way, and for the same object, receive six cents more; and each scholar who should learn such a number of hymns, and chapters in the Bible, six cents more; and each scholar who should learn through the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, six cents more; and that in these ways, they might, by their diligence, and good conduct, greatly benefit themselves, and, at the same time, be constantly earning something for the heathen.

Both teachers, and scholars, when the system was unfolded, entered into it, with very great ardor; and the result has surpassed the most sanguine expectations.

At the examination it was found, that four hundred and fifteen children had attended school—that their average age was about eight years—that one hundred and eight had been at the head of their respective classes, more than six times; that one hundred and twenty-seven had learned through the Catechism; that two hundred and forty-one (all taken together,) had learned more than seven thousand verses of Hymns, and Divine Songs; and one hundred and twenty-one, more than five thousand verses of the Bible; that two hundred and forty-two had become members of the Society, and had, in addition to their contributions, earned for it fifteen dollars, and thirty cents.

Their behavior, at the examination, was remarkably good, and it is believed, that they sustained a better examination in the various branches of learning, than the Committee had ever witnessed before.

PASTOR.

REVIEWS.

XCV. *The Duties enjoined by the Fourth Commandment, illustrated in a Discourse delivered Jan. 1817. By AARON BANCROFT, D. D. Pastor of the Second Congregational Church in Worcester.* pp. 39.

It may not be known to all our readers, that Dr. Bancroft belongs to that class of ministers, who call themselves *liberal*. We do not mention this for the sake of prejudging his sermon, which must stand on its own merits; but merely that the quotations, which we shall make, may be the more easily understood.

The text of this discourse is the fourth commandment. In the first part of it, the preacher enforces the duty of *laboring six days*; in the second, the duty of *remembering the Sabbath*. It is easy to see, that the particular object in view, was, to expose the sin of attending religious meetings on the six days of the week, rather than to promote the strict observation of the seventh. Indeed, we presume the author himself would not deny, that he was induced to prepare and publish the sermon by the fact, that conferences, and other religious meetings, have recently been held with unusual

frequency in his town and neighborhood. It is because we suppose this to be the occasion of his publishing, that we have thought it advisable to write the present article. The sermon is not in itself deserving of particular notice. The style is feeble; the train of thought not remarkably well connected; and the effect by no means powerful. The subject is, however, of considerable importance; for if it is a breach of the fourth commandment to meet for social prayer and religious improvement, on any of the six days, it is time that Christians should be better instructed in this matter, than they generally are; better instructed, also, than the most faithful, and laborious ministers of Christ ever have been. But let us attend to what Dr. B. has thought proper to say, in reference to this subject. "All will allow," he asserts, "that it is the duty of man to be *constantly* occupied in some honest and useful *worldly pursuit*." Now we by no means allow this. It is the duty of man to be constantly employed in the service of God. It is the duty of most men to have some regular worldly occupation; and of every man not to be idle; but worldly pursuits should not engross the mind, nor be permitted to exert a constant influence. There should be many and frequent intervals, in which the world should be forgotten, and eternity brought near. There should be many seasons, in which the social powers of man are employed in conveying and receiving spiritual improvement, and in the immediate worship of God.

After stating that labor is enjoined by the authority of God, the preacher adds: "But some fall into great and perhaps fatal mistakes on this subject. They appear entirely to separate the common business of society from religious duties, and to suppose that religion, strictly speaking, cannot be carried into the ordinary employments of life." At the close of two paragraphs to this purpose, the following sage conclusion is formed: "All these absurdities result from an error in first principles." We can assure the preacher, that he will not find the persons, whom he has described, among the patrons and promoters of conferences, and other similar religious meetings. They know very well, that religion is to be carried into all the concerns of life; that mere profession is nothing; that the mere attendance on religious worship, whether on the Sabbath or any other day, is nothing; that the heart is to be renewed, and the life conformed to the requirements of the Scriptures. We have, indeed, known individuals, whose views of religion bore a great resemblance to the description which has been quoted and referred to; but these individuals never entered a conference room. Their religion was confined to the Sabbath, and consisted entirely of a dull attendance on dull services for a part, or the whole, of that day, whenever they could attend without the least inconvenience. Can Dr. Bancroft be ignorant, that such men as Baxter, Whitefield, Cotton Mather, Brainerd, Edwards, Luther, Knox, who abounded in extraordinary services of religion, would be the last men in the world to separate religion from the common duties of life? It is unques-

tionable, that such men have insisted on the all-pervading influence of religion, with incomparably more zeal, eloquence, pungency, and force of argument, than any other class of men. So remarkably has this been the case, that they have been stigmatized by a wicked world for the superior strictness of their lives, more frequently than for any other cause. They have been called, by way of derision, *puritans, methodists, saints, &c.* and by the more serious names of *bigots, hypocrites, &c.* merely because they urged upon others, and practised themselves, a strictly religious intercourse with the world. Had they confined their religion to conferences and conventicles, and appeared, at other times, like other men, worldly, vain, sensual, trifling, profane, fond of worldly amusements, or merely decent in their morals, and careless of the morals of others, they would never have drawn upon themselves those bitter reproaches, which they have always been compelled to bear. The world may laugh at mere professions; it may despise hypocrisy; but it hates religion. Why should Dr. B. have spent a great part of his sermon in proving, that religion should be carried into all the duties of life, unless he was desirous of insinuating, that persons, who attend religious meetings on secular days, hold a different opinion, and think that they are to be religious only when engaged in religious worship? And yet for such an insinuation there is not the slightest pretence.

The pith of the sermon before us is crowded into the following paragraph:

"The duty of stated employment extends to every portion of the six days; we may not, therefore, suspend our weekly business under the pretence of attention to religious exercises not enjoined. In these cases the question ever occurs, Who hath required this at your hands? The direction is as imperative to work six days, as it is to rest on the seventh. As we may not carry the labors of the week into the Sabbath, so we may not carry the rest of the Sabbath into the week. The man who essentially neglects his secular employments to join in unrequired offices of piety, has not the countenance of religion; on the contrary, he suspends a duty enjoined by religion to offer upon the altar of Heaven unhallowed sacrifice." p. 15.

This paragraph is mollified, and explained away by what follows:

"You will understand me, my Christian Brethren. The business of the week does not exclude exercises of devotion in the family or closet. It is but seldom that the most urgent transactions of society need suspend those offices of piety which are proper for a family; and this suspension can be only occasional. The stated employments of men will also give place to occasional exercises of public worship. Works of necessity and mercy are justifiable on the Sabbath; and particular seasons may with propriety be set apart for religion. The exceptions in both cases prove the general rule. But these occasional exercises of religious worship must not have so frequent recurrence, as to operate injuriously upon the important occupations of the week. They who neglect the essential duties of the

family to join in exercises denominated religious, violate the essential principles of Christianity; for they omit indispensable duties enjoined by God, to engage in services which he has not required. The stated business of society is no hindrance to those silent reflections upon religious subjects, to which the character and condition of man ever invite. These are proper at all times; and they are no less the foundation of moral stability, than the source of self-complacence and delight. No man need be so completely occupied in secular affairs, as not to find seasonable moments to devote to meditations, which may arm him with resolution to repel assaults made upon his virtuous habits, in his intercourse with the world.

"The common employments of the week will also admit of that interchange of social offices which is adapted to the several ages and situations of men. But even here a sense of moral obligation should be manifested. I do not mean a sanctimonious countenance, using scriptural phrases, associating the names of God and Christ with the ordinary concerns of the world, or intruding sacred subjects into every company. A man may do all this, and yet not possess the spirit of the Gospel. I mean that religion should regulate our social intercourse, and preside over our most pleasurable enjoyments. In the hours of relaxation, amidst scenes of festive joy, it should restrain us within the bounds of propriety, chasten our mirth, and confine us to those gratifications and delights, which will yield satisfaction in the moments of sober reflection. But neither the cheerful pleasures, which within the prescribed bounds are commendable, nor even such services of the altar as are not divinely prescribed, must be allowed to interfere with those secular employments, which God, by the very condition of our being, has made necessary, and which he has expressly enjoined by revelation. To neglect duties commanded, that we may zealously engage in exercises not required, is to substitute our own devices for the counsels of Heaven. The usual consequences which arise from the multiplication of religious meetings during the week, are divisions in Christian societies, and alienation and bitterness among brethren of the same community. Those who attend these meetings, are apt to consider themselves as more religious than such as discountenance them; and they often abound in severe censures and uncharitable judgments. From disapprobation of these assemblies, some may be induced to condemn practices, which in themselves are worthy of imitation; and thus, from the abuse of religion, prejudices are excited against it. These alienations and prejudices not unfrequently find their way into families, interrupt the order and harmony of domestic society, suppress in its members the Christian spirit, and impede their progress in the divine life." p.15-18.

Taking the whole of these quotations together, it is impossible to make out any rule of conduct from them. In particular passages the rule is laid down with great positiveness; but in others it is qualified, in such a manner, as that nothing of the original rule remains. We are first told, that "the duty of stated employment extends to *every portion* of the six days," and that "we may not *suspend* our weekly business under the pretence of attention to religious exercises not enjoined." This rule is plain enough. If we read on a sentence or two, the line is still more precisely

drawn. "The direction is as imperative to work *six days*, as it is to rest on the *seventh*. As we may not carry the labors of the week into the Sabbath, so we may not carry the rest of the Sabbath into the week." Of course, we suppose, that when we see men laboring on the Sabbath, without any apparent necessity, and others attending a prayer-meeting, or a conference, on one of the six days, without any apparent necessity, we are to pronounce them all equally guilty of violating the fourth commandment. Now we cannot regard this in any other light, than as perfectly contemptible. Nor will any considerable class of the public regard it in any other light. The careless, the profane and stupid, may ridicule religious meetings; they may call those, who frequent such meetings, fanatics, enthusiasts, &c. &c. but it would never occur to *them*, that the being present at a religious meeting on a secular day is a breach of the fourth commandment. Such a thought would occur only to a man, who wanted to allege some grave reason against conferences, and found it necessary to allege this for want of any other more plausible. Immediately afterwards the rule is laid down in the following words: "The man *who essentially neglects* his secular employments to join in *unrequired offices* of piety has not the countenance of religion." To this rule we give our cordial assent; and the only difference, between Dr. B. and ourselves, would relate to what is an *essential neglect* of secular employments, and what *ARE unrequired offices* of piety. Again, we are told, that "the business of the week does not exclude exercises of devotion in the family or closet;" that "the stated employments of men will also give place to *occasional exercises* of public worship;" and that "*particular seasons*," in the six days, "may be set apart for religion." By which of all these rules does Dr. B. mean to abide? The first in order are the most positive, definite, and authoritative; the last are so loose, as not to answer the purpose of rules at all. The most zealous advocate of conferences would not desire greater liberty than to have *occasional exercises* of worship, in the course of the week, and to set apart *particular seasons* for religion. Suppose, then, that we take the middle rule, in regard to which we agree with the preacher, and say, that the man, who *essentially neglects* his business under pretence of religion, is blameworthy. Admitting the correctness of this position, as a general rule, we solemnly ask Dr. B. whether these persons within his knowledge, who are fond of attending conferences and prayer-meetings, do in fact *essentially neglect* their business? Let him make an accurate scrutiny; let him write down the names of all, who, as he supposes, break the fourth commandment by attending conferences and prayer-meetings, and the names of all whose consciences cannot reproach them with this offence, and, at the end of one year, or five years, let him decide whether the former class have *essentially neglected* their business; and whether their houses are less comfortable, their families worse provided for, and their affairs more embarrassed

with debt, than those of the other class. We have no fears as to the result of such an estimate.

Though we admit that, as a general rule, men ought not to neglect their business, under pretence of religion, we by no means condemn every individual, who, in a state of great religious anxiety, devotes his whole time, for a season, to obtaining religious knowledge and attending to the concerns of his soul; or who, in a time of general inquiry, devotes his whole time to admonishing, directing, consoling, and praying for, those of his friends and acquaintances, who are in different stages of religious experience. There are many occasions in life, which justify and require a suspension of ordinary business. A man loses a wife, or a child. Shall he be blamed for suspending his business, and retiring, for a season, to meditate, examine his heart, and humble himself before God? On the contrary, do not all men consider it as a proof of extraordinary hardness of heart, and of culpable indifference, to engage in the bustle of the world, immediately after such an event? Junius was not ignorant of this general state of feeling, when he told the public, in one of his severest papers, that the Duke of Bedford attended "the ballotings at the India-House," soon after the death of his son and heir. Sometimes the political state of the country may require, that every good citizen should suspend his business for a season, to secure some great public good, or avert some national calamity. Shall a man be forbidden to withdraw from the world, and take time enough to examine the Scriptures, inquire what is the state of his soul, implore the mercy of God, and make use of all the means of religious instruction within his reach? Suppose a person to say, as multitudes might say, "I have lived many years without religion; ignorant of God, where it is so easy to obtain a knowledge of him; ignorant of the Gospel, though it has often been preached in my hearing; destitute of faith, destitute of holiness, stupid, hard-hearted, a slave to sin and Satan. I feel that I am dead in trespasses, and exposed to righteous punishment. The way of escape I see not: whether my character will ever be changed I do not know; but I know very well, that my present character is odious and deformed, and my prospects tremendous indeed. I will devote my time to a thorough examination of my case. I will not be afraid to know the truth. I will read the Bible; seek the company and ask the prayers of the pious; attend every religious meeting, where I have a rational expectation of increasing my serious impressions; and shudder at the thought of banishing serious considerations by worldly business or pleasure." In accordance with this determination, the person, whose case has been stated, lays aside his worldly employment partly or wholly as he may be able, and applies himself to seeking *the kingdom of God and his righteousness*: and who will pretend, that by so doing, he stands chargeable with a breach of the fourth commandment?

Dr. B. himself teaches us, that "the common employments of the week will admit of that interchange of social offices, which is

adapted to the several ages and situations of men." That is, we suppose, men and women, the old and young, may visit each other; they may assemble for mere amusement; they may eat, and drink, and laugh, and play; they may spend afternoon and evening "amidst scenes of festive joy," as the Doctor expresses it; but they must not meet for religious improvement, on any one of the secular days: this would be an evident violation of the decalogue, which commands us to work "*every portion* of the six days." But what if some persons should say, as they certainly will, "We wish to promote our social enjoyment; we wish to employ our social faculties in the worthiest and best manner possible. For this purpose we wish to assemble frequently, that we may unite in reading the word of God and conversing upon it; in singing praises to our God and Savior; in praying for grace to perform all our social and relative duties; in rejoicing at the glad tidings of the conversion of sinners; in commiserating the unhappy condition of all, who are ignorant of the Gospel, whether in Christian or pagan countries; and in supplicating blessings upon all men, friends and enemies, Christians, Jews, Mahometans, and pagans. We feel the highest and purest gratification, while employed in these social duties; a gratification incomparably superior to any thing which can be experienced "*amidst scenes of festive joy.*" We also become intimately acquainted with each other's wants and difficulties; we feel a much deeper interest in each other's happiness, than we otherwise should; and are able much more effectually to discharge the duties, which we owe to each other as Christians, than we could do, if we saw each other but seldom, and then while mingling in the busy world, or the promiscuous circle. We therefore ask the liberty of seeking our social pleasures, or at least a principal part of them, at religious meetings." What would Dr. B. say to such a representation?

It is very evident, that Dr. B.'s mind experienced some changes, while he was engaged in forming such an exposition of the fourth commandment as should interdict conferences. In the first place, he prohibited all meetings for religious worship, unless upon the Sabbath. But this would not do. He would involve in the same criminality with conferences all public fasts and thanksgivings, and all lectures preparatory to the communion. He would thus arraign before him the Governor and Council, and nearly all the clergy, as guilty of violating, and leading the whole community to violate, an express statute of the decalogue. He would also implicitly charge his clerical brethren in Boston with a similar breach of the divine law, repeated every week on Thursday, at the most busy hour of the day; at which hour they statedly entice the people to leave the labor of the six days, and attend a religious service "*not enjoined.*" Though very few are induced to desert their business, or their pleasure, by the enticement, it is not certain that this circumstance diminishes the criminality of the transaction. All these cases, doubtless, occurred to the mind of Dr. Bancroft; and, indeed, if we remember aright, the reverend gentleman him-

self has been known to preach in Boston, on one of the *six days*, thus holding a religious service *not enjoined*, and countenancing the same conduct in others; and, to make the offence still more aggravated, this was done in the midst of election-week;—a season full of temptations of a similar kind, when the bells are almost continually ringing to call the people away from their labors to join in “*unrequired offices of piety*,” and when the metropolis is full of strangers, who may be expected to carry home the baleful example.

When all these things had occurred to the mind of the Doctor, he found it necessary to alter his rule entirely; and all that we can make of it afterwards is, that to attend religious meetings very frequently, or to sanction “a multiplication of religious meetings,” is a very bad thing, and, if not forbidden in the decalogue, it is forbidden, and must be forbidden, somewhere else.

As some of our readers may not know what sort of religious meetings conferences are, and may have acquired an unreasonable prejudice against the name, when they would be highly pleased with the thing, we shall briefly describe the various assemblies which have been comprised under that general denomination.

1. A proper conference is a meeting of persons for purposes of devotion, and religious edification, at which the male part of the assembly engage in religious conversation. The conversation is usually prompted by some portion of Scripture, which is read and proposed for discussion. The speakers are usually persons well known by the hearers, and respected on account of their religious character. Some conferences are large, admitting many persons of both sexes, and all ages, and are frequented with great avidity by those who are in a state of concern for their souls. Other meetings of this class are confined to a few families, who meet at each other's houses for the purpose of enjoying this kind of social instruction. We have been long acquainted with conferences, as they are conducted in many different places; and do not hesitate to rank them among the most efficacious means of grace, and as being very powerful auxiliaries to the preaching of the Gospel. We are happy to say, that large conference-rooms are erected in many of our towns. No parish ought to be without a place well adapted to such meetings.

2. Various prayer meetings are held by ministers and private Christians, such as the monthly and quarterly prayer-meetings, and those, which are held, either statedly or occasionally, to supplicate the influences of the Holy Spirit. These meetings, though often called conferences, are wholly taken up with the exercises of prayer and praise, except that a brief exhortation is sometimes added by the clergyman. At the monthly concert missionary intelligence is frequently communicated.

3. Clergymen often attend religious meetings, which are principally held in the evening, and at which all the services devolve upon themselves. These meetings are convened in different parts of the parish, and accommodate different neighborhoods.

They are improperly called conferences. In these cases, the clergymen do in fact preach; though in a less formal manner, and with less preparation, than in their regular sermons on the Sabbath. What is lost, however, in regularity and accuracy of composition, is sometimes more than supplied by what is gained in animation and pathos. Let us not be understood to intimate, that clergymen always perform all the services, at religious meetings when they are present. At conferences, properly so called, ministers and private brethren alternately take part in the conversation and the devotional exercises.

Some of our readers may think it unnecessary to have given a description of meetings, which are perfectly familiar to them; not considering that others know nothing of conferences, except from the sneers of scoffers, or the misrepresentations of persons hostile to experimental religion. We are desirous, also, that the few readers of the Panoplist, who live on the other side of the Atlantic, and who are unacquainted with our manners and customs, should have it in their power to form some correct judgment concerning the tendency of meetings, which they often see mentioned in American publications. For this purpose we add, that social meetings of the kind described, whether called by the names of societies, conferences, or concerts of prayer, as conducted by Christians of the Congregational and Presbyterian denominations, are solemn, orderly, regular meetings. Instances of light and improper conduct are much less frequent in them, than in promiscuous assemblies for public worship on the Sabbath.

Are these meetings for religious improvement lawful upon any of the six days? We answer, yes; and defend this decision by Scripture, reason, history and experience.

There are many passages of Scripture, which implicitly warrant frequent meetings for social religious worship. We shall select a few. Perhaps no passage is more frequently, or more properly, cited in reference to this subject, than Mal. iii, 16, 17: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Dr. Bancroft need not be informed, that by them who *feared the Lord* are intended truly religious persons. Of such persons it was the peculiar characteristic, that they *spake often* one to another. The whole passage clearly implies, that these conferences were on the subject of religion. In what manner did God regard the patrons and promoters of them? He represents himself as listening to their conversation, and as testifying his approbation in the strongest and most affecting manner. Let all, who oppose religious meetings of the character here described, look well to it, lest they form a different judgment from that which God has expressed. Let them examine thoroughly, whether their opposition does not arise

from a lamentable deficiency of the fear of God. Those who *never* speak one to another, on the subject of religion, have great reason to conclude, that there is no book of remembrance kept for them; and to tremble, lest they should not be found among the jewels, which will for ever adorn the crown of the glorified Savior.

Again; Christ declared to his disciples, for the benefit of all succeeding ages, "Where two or three are *gathered together* in my name, there am I in the midst of them." The form of expression clearly indicates, that the act of *assembling* for social religious worship is peculiarly pleasing to the Savior: nor can it be pretended, that the meetings which he had in view, were to be confined to the Sabbath. The context excludes any such interpretation. We cannot but remark how different an impression is made on the mind by our Savior's discourses and example, from that which is made by Dr. Bancroft's arguments, if arguments they can be called, against the multiplication of religious meetings.

Immediately after the ascension of Christ, it is recorded of the Apostles, that they "all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." We find soon after that a hundred and twenty were convened, doubtless for conference on religious subjects, and for social worship. Some of the effects of the great work of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, are thus described: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Is it possible to conceive of any example, which should more expressly authorize very frequent meetings for religious purposes, than the one which has been quoted? An example, which was set by all the Apostles of our Lord, which was followed by all their converts, and which was sanctioned by the ascended Redeemer, who carried on his gracious purposes of mercy by means of these multiplied meetings, is so entirely above the attacks of argument or sophistry, as not to need explanation or enforcement. The meetings were held *daily*, and a divine blessing *daily* rested on them. Had any of the apostles been of Dr. Bancroft's mind, they would have remonstrated with the people against this constant violation of the fourth commandment. They would have urged the brethren not to *suspend* their worldly pursuits; and they might have assigned a much more powerful necessity of unremitted labor, than Dr. B. can assign now; viz. a preparation for those days of persecution, which the infant church was soon to experience.

In the Acts and the Epistles there is a multitude of passages, which teach, by precept and example, the duty of convening very frequently for religious worship. It cannot be necessary to quote them and enlarge upon them. There is not a single text, which, by the most distant implication, can be made to condemn the hold-

ing of religious meetings, at any time when it is convenient to attend them.

What is taught in the most forcible manner by Scripture, is confirmed by the unbiassed dictates of reason and of common sense. Are the social powers of man to be applied to all other human concerns, but to be debarred from religion? Is our knowledge on all other subjects greatly increased, and deeply impressed on the mind, by the familiar lecture, and the animated conversation, and shall religion alone be debarred the use of these pleasing and powerful auxiliaries? But it is a waste of time to argue in so clear a case. The man, who loves religion, will love to converse upon it; the man, who leads a life of prayer, will love to unite in prayer with the social circle, as well as with the great assembly; the man who feels the great realities of the world to come will seize every opportunity to awaken the sinner, and comfort and animate the true disciple. All the logic in the world will not induce him to smother in his own bosom the best feelings of his heart. Religion would be gloomy, indeed, if men were forbidden to communicate their thoughts respecting it, and were thus excluded from some of the most promising means of becoming useful on earth, and of preparing for heaven.

The history of the church in every age will testify, that the most pious ministers and people have uniformly practised, and delighted to practise, just such methods of exciting attention to religion, and of keeping their own hearts awake and alive to God, as are practised by the frequenters of conferences and prayer-meetings at the present day. The late Dr. Dwight, whose name we would mention with great respect and affection, used to say, that he had attended to the history of the church with a view to this particular subject; and that whenever and wherever there had been a remarkable revival of vital godliness, just such religious meetings have been held, and just such doctrines have been preached, as are the common means and attendants of religious awakenings in our times. Such were the meetings in which Baxter poured out the desires of his holy soul in prayer: and such were the doctrines which flowed from his persuasive tongue. Such were the meetings, which were the constant theme of ridicule and scoffing, in the profligate reign of Charles the second; and which were prohibited by that most odious and tyrannical engine of bigotry and licentiousness, the Conventicle Act.

If we leave history, and appeal to the experience of the pious, we shall come to the same conclusion. It will be alleged, perhaps, that this is an assumption; and that we take it for granted, that the frequenters of religious meetings are of course pious. But we are willing to take any proper criterion of piety. Pass through our country; become acquainted with the character of the members of our churches; find those who are most conscientious in their dealings, most punctual and devout in attending family worship, most ready to bear testimony in favor of religion, most faithful in admonishing and reproofing others, most thoughtful respecting death

and the world to come, most intimately acquainted with the Scriptures, and most apt to seek for enjoyment in contemplating the character and government of God, and in holy communion with their Redeemer. When these persons are found, take them to a religious conference, and inquire whether they approve of such a meeting. The answer will be, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, that they *do* most emphatically.

Let Dr. Bancroft inquire who are the men, that feel most heartily opposed to conferences and prayer-meetings. Admitting, as we cheerfully do, that some well-meaning persons may have received a dislike to them, through prejudice and misrepresentation, it is no more than truth to say, that men notoriously destitute of religion are almost universally opposed to them. When such meetings are first set up in a town, every drunkard, every reviler and scoffer, is almost sure to raise his voice against them, and to make them a standing topic of his sneers and reproaches. Unhappily he is often joined by persons of a more decent character, who cannot bear the humbling truths of the Gospel, and who keep themselves at a great distance from every thing that looks like experimental religion. In short, an intimate acquaintance with the characters of those, who are most violently opposed to social meetings for prayer and religious improvement, will satisfy the considerate Christian, that there must be something *very good*, in a thing which is thus opposed; just as the extravagant and malignant hostility to the name of Calvin, considering who *they are* that indulge it, proves him to have been an eminent servant of God, and an illustrious benefactor of mankind.

Dr. Bancroft pleads against conferences the authority of the fourth commandment. We advise him to look around upon his auxiliaries, and see whether they are remarkably strict in observing that commandment, or any other: we mean those auxiliaries, who exhibit the most active opposition to religious meetings. Are they not the same kind of men, who enacted and enforced the infamous Conventicle Act already mentioned; either bigoted formalists in religion, or profane, light-minded, and immoral in their lives?

The grand objection to frequent religious meetings, which Dr. Bancroft insists upon, is the suspension of labor which they occasion; or, in other words, the waste of time. But is the waste of time his real objection? Whatever the fact may be with him, we are well assured, that the waste of time is *not* the real objection with those who frequently bring it forward as such. One reason of our assurance is, that they make no complaint concerning the waste of time in a thousand other ways. Thus, for instance, a gang of equestrian performers may come to a town, and may draw together crowds of people every evening in the week: All this is very well; for the people need relaxation and amusement after their hard labor. Serious persons, however, instead of going to the circus, choose to hold a religious conference. This cannot be tolerated; and the guilty individuals are addressed in the language of Pharaoh; "Wherefore do ye let the people from their

works?" "They be idle; therefore they cry, saying, let us go and sacrifice to our God." The gang of equestrians may carry five or ten thousand dollars from a single city as the reward of their dexterity; they may even carry it *out of the country* too; and no remonstrance is made by a certain class of persons. But let a society of religious females raise a hundred dollars, for the support of missionaries abroad, and a sorrowful complaint is heard, that so much money should be *carried out of the country* for so useless a purpose. A day is coming, when all vain pretences will be brushed away like a spider's web, and when the real motives of action will be disclosed.

The argument of Dr. B. reminded us of a passage in Dr. Witherspoon's *Characteristics*, which we shall quote. Some of our readers may need to be informed, that the *moderate party* in Scotland greatly resembled the present *liberal party* in this country. The seventh maxim laid down by that great man, for the regulation of the moderate party, is as follows: "A moderate man must endeavor, as much as he handsomely can, to put off any appearances of devotion, and avoid all unnecessary exercises of religious worship, whether public or private."

While discussing this maxim, and urging it upon the moderate clergy, he thus addresses them:

"Being members of church judicatures, and we hope the majority in most of them, the moderate party can discourage and stifle all motions for extraordinary fasts or thanksgivings; which experience has taught us serve only to promote idleness and discourage industry. Upon the day that Henry V. fought at Agincourt, a solemn fast was kept in England for his success; and some historians are pleased to say, that the prayers of the nation had some share in procuring the victory; but later histories have disproved this; and now it can be demonstrated upon paper, that a fast day in Scotland loses 50,000*l.* to the nation, while nobody can make any calculation what it wins." *Witherspoon's Works*, vol. iii, p. 235.

By the same process of calculation it can be made to appear, that every fast day costs the people of Massachusetts more than \$100,000.

One of our correspondents was greatly perplexed several years ago, in an attempt to learn what could be the *real* ground of opposition to conferences. It appeared, on examination, that every one of the *ostensible* reasons, which are commonly assigned against them, may be alleged with much greater force against balls; which, however, the enemies of conferences are very willing to tolerate. After the production of nine or ten of these reasons, and a satisfactory conclusion that they could not be the true reasons, our correspondent gave up the pursuit in despair. We quote a paragraph as applicable to the subject before us:

"I had heard it said, that people neglect their business to attend night-meetings; that they spend more time than they can afford, more than they ought to afford: in short, that conferences are too expensive.

But I soon perceived, that this objection could be sincere only on the ground of the excess of the expense of conferences above that of balls; for though the one class of associations costs time chiefly, and the other money chiefly, yet if, in fact, they are equally expensive, then, so far as relates to expense, they should be equally condemned, or equally tolerated. As it seemed clear to me, that the time, and extraordinary dress, and immediate expense, of four balls, would exceed the expense of two hundred evening conferences, I was forbidden to conclude, that people, who are able to estimate relative expenses as well as myself, could satisfy themselves in their opposition to conferences, on the ground of economy. Especially, since tea parties and evening visits, commonly occupy as much time without censure, as is devoted to religious meetings, though the expense be far greater." *Panoplist for Dec. 1811*, p. 296.

In his address to farmers and mechanics, Dr. Bancroft says: "Worldly employment is incumbent on you through the week. On the six days, therefore, your advantages for the acquisition of knowledge must be comparatively small, and your opportunities few for close and continued meditations upon religious subjects." p. 31. Now Dr. B. cannot be ignorant, that farmers and many mechanics are not able to pursue their labors after dark. He knows very well, that these classes of persons have long winter evenings at their disposal; and as he has told them, that their religious advantages during the week are *small*, what reasonable objection can he have to their spending in religious meetings some part of that time, which cannot be devoted to their worldly employments?

Considering the general character of the party to which Dr. Bancroft is attached, we were not a little surprised to read the following sentence: "Catechisms put into your hands will afford you some assistance in the endeavor to establish in their tender minds* the great doctrines of the Gospel, and the important duties of the Christian character, and to give them some worthy apprehensions of God who made them, and of the Savior who died to open for their entrance the gate of immortality." p. 34. It seems lawful, then, to make use of *catechisms*, notwithstanding some clergymen of the liberal party are accustomed to speak of them with supreme contempt; nay more, it is lawful to *put catechisms into the hands* of parents, to assist in the religious education of children. These catechisms are to contain the *great doctrines of the Gospel*, and to impart *worthy apprehensions of God, and of the Savior*. Of course they must contain a *creed*: yes, a Christian creed, that object most odious and abhorred in the view of the liberal party, is now recommended by Dr. Bancroft to be put into the hands of parents and children. As this creed is to impart worthy apprehensions of Christ, it would seem that it must teach the character of Christ, and as it is designed for children, it would seem necessary that it should be plain, precise, and definite. We hope, therefore, that Dr. B. will never be found joining in the senseless clamor against creeds and catechisms.

* Dr. B. is speaking of children.

However we may differ from Dr. Bancroft in other things, we are happy to agree with him respecting the perpetual authority of the fourth commandment. It has been a favorite object with some of his liberal brethren, both in Europe and America, to deny that the Sabbath is binding upon the Christian world. They urge, in substance, that it was abolished with the ceremonial observances of the Jews. But Dr. B. holds to the fourth commandment in the strictest sense;—not only that it enjoins the observation of the Sabbath, but that it compels all men to labor “every portion of the six days.” Though we cannot accede to the latter part of this statement without qualification, we most cordially unite with him in urging the duty of keeping the Sabbath holy. As exertions are now making to prevent violations of the sacred rest, we cannot but desire that he and his friends should add the weight of their influence. Unless we are altogether deceived, this would be a much greater service to the church and the community, than any which can be rendered by opposing religious meetings on the other days of the week.

XCVI. *Neal's History of the Puritans*. Vol. II. Boston; 1817. 8vo. pp. 600. Price \$2 in boards.

(Continued from p. 82.)

THIS volume embraces the period from the death of Elisabeth to the commencement of the civil war in 1642, including some of the most eventful years of English history. It contains an account of those persecutions, which led to the settlement of New-England, and drove into exile such men as Robinson, Cotton, Norton, Hooker, Mather, &c.—men of great learning, eminent piety, and unwearied application to their pastoral duties. It lays before the reader, in chronological order, the principal facts which rendered the administration of Laud so odious to the British nation, and will cause his name to be abhorred through all succeeding ages. It exhibits the process by which two weak kings, under the influence of bigoted and unprincipled counsellors, were able gradually to disaffect the nation towards those forms of government in church and state, which had been previously established by long usage with the universal and hearty concurrence of the people. To whatever else the revolution, which brought Charles to the block, may be ascribed, it ought not to be ascribed to popular fickleness. The best part of the nation had groaned long under oppression; and there was in fact no probable method of obtaining redress, but by depriving the king and his minions of their power. The political troubles of that period were in a great measure owing to the antipathy, which proud, insolent, ambitious dignitaries of the church felt to real religion. Had there been less virtue, integrity, and conscientiousness, on the part of the non-conformists of those days, there would have been less resistance to superiors, and less exasperation and oppression on their

part. Persecution will not be long continued against those, who yield readily to the wishes of their persecutors.

There are two points of comparison between the tendency of Calvinism and that of Arminianism, which the volume before us brings forcibly to mind, and which it may be proper to mention.

The first is, that Arminianism, like other errors, spreads much more rapidly by secret arts, and in silence, than by open manly controversy. This has uniformly been the case. Mr. Neal says, in his preface, speaking of the times succeeding Archbishop Bancroft's persecutions,

"Arminianism was at this time both a church and state faction; the divines of this persuasion, apprehending their sentiments not very consistent with the received sense of the thirty-nine articles, and being afraid of the censures of a Parliament or convocation, took shelter under the prerogative, and went into all the slavish measures of the court to gain the royal favor, and to secure to their friends the chief preferments in the church. They persuaded his majesty to stifle the predestinarian controversy, both in the pulpit and press, and would, no doubt, in a few years have got the balance of numbers on their side, if, by grasping at too much, they had not precipitated both church and state into confusion." p. viii.

The Scriptures have repeatedly given it as a distinguishing characteristic of religious error, that it is accustomed to creep in *privily*. Thus it was with Arminianism in Great Britain, and in this country. Thus it has been with Socinianism. We do not deny, that champions of both these schemes have been frank and bold: we speak of the generality of the ministers, who have been engaged in making proselytes to these sects, when they have been a minority. But look at the records of Calvinism. Have its advocates been afraid or ashamed to avow their opinions, and to propagate them openly, though in ever so small a minority?

Again; it is notorious, that Laud and the other violent Arminians were desirous of abolishing the strict observance of the Sabbath, by inducing the people to engage in plays and sports on that day; while the Calvinists, that is the *doctrinal puritans*, as they were called, were remarkably strict in observing the Sabbath, and in all the duties of Christianity. Indeed, a strictly sober, devout, religious life exposed any man, whether of the clergy or laity, to ridicule, obloquy, suspicion, and persecution. Among the reasons why the more pious part of the community rejoiced at the fall of the bishops, the historian assigns the following: "Because they made a stricter inquiry after those who fasted and prayed, and joined together in religious exercises, than after those who were guilty of swearing, drunkenness, and other kinds of debauchery; and because they discouraged afternoon sermons and lectures, and encouraged sports and pastimes on the Lord's day." p. 533.

We copy the following account of Dr. Leighton's trial, as a specimen of the kind of justice, which was administered by the star-chamber.

"But Dr. *Alexander Leighton*, a Scots divine, and father of the worthy and celebrated prelate of that name, so highly commended by Bishop *Burnet* in the history of his Life and Times, met with severe usage in the star-chamber, for venturing to write against the hierarchy of the church. This divine had published during the last session of parliament, an *appeal to the parliament*; or, *Zion's plea against prelacy*, wherein he speaks not only

with freedom, but with very great rudeness and indecency against *Bishops*; calling them *men of blood*, and saying, that we do not read of a greater persecution and higher indignities done towards God's people in any nation than in this, since the death of Queen *Elizabeth*. He calls the prelacy of the church antichristian. He declaims vehemently against canons and ceremonies; and adds, that the church has her laws for the house of God. He styles the queen a daughter of *Heth*, and concludes with saying, what pity it is that so ingenuous and tractable a king should be so monstrously abused by the bishops, to the undoing of himself and his subjects. Now though the warmth of these expressions can no ways be justified, yet let the reader consider whether they bear any proportion to the sentence of the court. The cause was tried June 4, 1630. The defendant, in his answer, owned the writing of the book, denying any ill intention; his design being only to lay these things before the next parliament for their consideration. Nevertheless, the court adjudged unanimously, that for this offence *the doctor should be committed to the prison of the Fleet for life, and pay a fine of ten thousand pounds; that the HIGH COMMISSION should degrade him from his ministry; and that then he should be brought to the pillory at Westminster, while the court was sitting, and whipt; after whipping, be set upon the pillory a convenient time, and have one of his ears cut off, one side of his nose slit, and be branded in the face with a double S.S. for a sower of sedition: That then he should be carried back to prison, and after a few days be pilloried a second time in Cheapside, and be there likewise whipt, and have the other side of his nose slit, and his other ear cut off, and then be shut up in close prison for the remainder of his life.* Bishop *Laud* pulled off his cap while this merciless sentence was pronouncing, and gave God thanks for it!

"Between passing the sentence and execution, the doctor made his escape out of prison, but was retaken in Bedfordshire, and brought back to the Fleet. On Friday, Nov. 6, part of the sentence was executed upon him (says bishop *Laud* in his diary) after this manner: "He was severely whipt before he was put in the pillory. 2. Being set in the pillory, he had one of his ears cut off. 3. One side of his nose slit. 4. Branded on the cheek with a red-hot iron with the letters S. S. On that day seven-night, his sores upon his back, ears, nose and face, being not yet cured, he was whipt again at the pillory in Cheapside, and had the remainder of his sentence executed upon him, by cutting off the other ear, slitting the other side of his nose, and branding the other cheek." He was then carried back to prison, where he continued in close confinement for ten years, till he was released by the long parliament. The doctor was between forty and fifty years of age, of low stature, a fair complexion and well known for his learning and other abilities: but his long and close confinement had so impaired his health, that when he was released he could hardly walk, see, or hear. The sufferings of this learned man moved the people's compassion; and, I believe, the records of the inquisition can hardly furnish an example of equal severity." pp. 235—237.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL NARRATIVE OF MISSIONARY LABORS, PERFORMED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF CONNECTICUT.

(Concluded from p. 88.)

An extensive field is opening to the west and south, and a vast region of country yet lies waste. The people, though numerous, are, in a great measure, destitute of Ministers, Bibles, and every means of religious instruction; and are, literally, perishing for lack of vision. The States of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Indiana, with the Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri territories, have been thought to open an ample field for missionary labors, which promises great good to souls. The Trustees have, accordingly, appointed some to visit those distant places. One of these is the Rev. Nathan B. Darrow. He commenced his tour to the west, from the Connecticut Reserve, last June. He, from thence, by a circuitous route, passed through the interior of Ohio to Indiana, as far as Jeffersonville. From thence he communicated an account of his journey and labors on the way, as well as his future prospects.

Mr. Derrow found, by the best information he could obtain, that the whole State of Ohio contains 35 counties, comprising a population of about 350,000 souls; and that there are no more than about 50 Presbyterian and Congregational Ministers to supply the whole State. He found in travelling through Ohio that, in some parts, for 50, or 60, and some instances for 90 miles, there is not one Minister, nor a single regularly organized congregation.

In his journey to Jeffersonville, Mr. Derrow visited and preached in a large number of settlements. In performing this part of his travels he spent 14 weeks; in which he rode 1009 miles; preached 71 times; planted one church; baptised 29 children and one adult. He notes in his journal, "It is but just to observe that while passing through regions where the light of divine truth does but faintly shine, and the prospects of religion are darkened by clouds of error and corruption, I have every where (with few exceptions) been received with cordiality, and treated with respect."

When Mr. Derrow wrote the letter alluded to above, which was the 26th of September, he proposed, after spending a few weeks in that part of Indiana, to go north to fort Harrison, and then down the Wabash, and proceed to explore the Illinois territory.

The Rev. Messrs. Stephen Mason and Herman Halsey, having been appointed to Kentucky, and received ordination as Evangelists, entered on their mission the beginning of June. After a journey of 30 days they arrived safely in Kentucky; and having obtained the best information they were able, they concluded to spend the summer in the northern counties of the State, as affording the greatest prospect of usefulness. By the latest accounts, which were from Mr. Halsey, the 26th of August, and from Mr. Mason, the 6th of September, they were laboring in different parts of the northern counties; but expected soon to proceed to the south western part of the State. They agree in their accounts of the deplorable state of morals and religion, and the imperious call for ministerial labors. In most places they have been cordially received, and hospitably entertained; and the people were generally disposed to hear the word.

The Rev. Joseph Treat was appointed, last May, a Missionary to Indiana. He set out from New Milford on the 4th of June, and pursued his journey through Washington county, in Pennsylvania, into the State of Ohio. He passed through the north part of Ohio, spent some weeks on the Connecticut Reserve, visited the counties on the head waters of the Muskingum, and then down through the middle of the State, into Indiana. This route took up the most of the summer. He wrote from Lawrenceburg the 14th of October. He was then expecting before winter should set in, to make a tour through the south part of the State.

In the month of August, 1815, the Rev. Daniel C. Banks was appointed a Missionary for one year to Kentucky. He commenced his journey to that region on the 7th of November. From Pittsburg he passed through several counties of Ohio, adjoining and lying south of the Connecticut Reserve, visited the settlements on the head waters of the Scioto river, and then down the river to Chillicothe. From thence he pervaded a part of Indiana, and crossing the Ohio river into Kentucky, he passed through and preached in the settlements lying in his route to Louisville, at the falls of the Ohio, 640 miles below Pittsburg. After spending a few days at Louisville, he took a small circuit

into Indiana, preached several times, visited a number of families, some of which were from Connecticut, and then returned to Louisville. At this place he received a call from the Presbyterian church to become their Pastor. A compliance with this call he thought to be his duty, and, of course, concluded to leave the country, and return home to make arrangements for the removal of his family. On his way home he preached in the destitute regions, through which he passed, as often as opportunity presented.

In consequence of an appointment as a Missionary to Kentucky, Mr. Banks is now fixed in the ministry in that region, where the pointings of divine providence indicate extensive and great usefulness. How often do men use the means God appoints, not knowing the end He has in view! We are many times led in a way which we know not. God's providence is a great deep!

During his whole journey, which was performed between the 7th of November, and the middle of March, Mr. Banks travelled 1842 miles; preached 54 times; baptised 3 children; visited many families, and a number of schools, catechising and instructing the children and youth.

In his journal he observes, "Wherever I came, I was gladly received. Wherever I preached, the people were attentive and solemn. In every place I found a few pious people, who seemed, in the good providence of God, to be placed there, that they might, by their prayers, example and influence, do good to those around them." He witnessed no general attention to religion in any place; but individuals in several places were deeply impressed, and earnestly inquired what they should do to be saved.

The Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury has had and accepted an appointment to Tennessee. A communication has been received from him, of June 15th, 1816. He was then at Staunton, county of Augusta, and State of Virginia. He gives an account of some parts of Virginia through which he had passed, as lying waste, and almost entirely destitute of religious instruction.

He expected when he wrote, to be in Tennessee in about a fortnight. But he says, "I know not what I shall do. I am but a feeble man, and almost the whole region, on every side, lies destitute."*

Letters have been received from the Rev. Salmon Giddings, and the Rev. Timothy Flint, two Missionaries to the remote regions to the westward.

By letters from Mr. Giddings it appears, that he had performed the various duties of a Missionary, at St. Louis, in the Missouri Territory, and a large number of settlements in those parts. The people where he travelled were generally disposed to attend on religious instruction, and some would go ten miles to hear a sermon. He had formed a church at Bellevue; and had agreed to visit the people at Bonhomme, and form a church there in September.

Mr. Giddings notices, in his letter of August 26th, that he had found a great increase of attention to the word since his arrival in that country. Many of the people had never before heard a Presbyterian. The most of the preaching in all that region had been by travelling Methodist preachers, who, as is common with such as have great

* Since this Narrative was written, a letter has been received from Mr. Kingsbury, giving an account of his arrival in Tennessee, and of missionary labor performed by him, the particulars of which will be contained in the next annual Narrative.

zeal and little knowledge, had exerted themselves to excite prejudice against Ministers of the Presbyterian order. But these prejudices, Mr. Giddings found, were growing less; and the prospect greatly brightening in favor of evangelical truth.

Mr. Flint wrote three letters from Cincinnati, viz. January 18th; February 12th; and March 20th. In his letter of January 18th, he mentions having fixed a few stations where he could go at regular intervals, and alternate his labors. This method he thought the best calculated to promote the objects of the mission. It would give time to spread extensive information as to the time and place of worship, and collect more hearers, than could be brought together to attend the services of a continually travelling Missionary. When this letter was written, he had made one excursion over the great Miami, to Whitewater, on the western verge of the State, and preached both in Ohio and Indiana. The people there received him with cordiality and gratitude, and he had considerable and solemn audiences.

One of his stations is at North Bend, a village on the Ohio, 17 miles below Cincinnati. General Harrison, late Governor of Indiana, a gentleman very friendly to the mission, politely offered his house as a place of worship. How strikingly true it is, that in every part of the world where the Gospel is sent, the Lord raises up some to be friendly to the cause, and give it aid and support!

In this letter Mr. Flint observes, "My heart sinks within me, when I observe the manner in which the people, in general, spend the Sabbath; the horrible profanity which, every where shocks the ear, and the lamentable destitution of the first rudiments of learning among the children and youth."

In his letter of February 12th, Mr. Flint observes that the need of missionary labors every day more fully unfolds itself. He says, "I had yesterday, at General Harrison's, 200 hearers, where the first time I preached I had not 30. The house was crowded, and so large a congregation was never seen in the place." He adds, "The serious every where beg me to represent the deplorable destitution of religious instruction."

In Mr. Flint's letter of March 20, he informs that he had been laboring as a Missionary in that quarter since the last of November; that he had preached three and four times a week; that he had been every where kindly received; and that he had formed two societies, one at Newport, and the other at North Bend, which give promise of some stability and permanence, after he should leave them. He had, at that time, made an excursion through some parts of Indiana and Kentucky, in which he rode 300 miles, and preached repeatedly.

When that letter was written he determined on going to St. Louis and its vicinity, being persuaded that missionary labors were more needed there than in Ohio, and the parts he had visited. To this determination he was induced, not only by the best advice he could obtain in his tour to Kentucky, but by a letter from a gentleman at St. Louis, who appeared very friendly to the great object of the mission. The gentleman writes thus: "Should you feel willing to come to St. Louis, and not tire, or faint on the way, I have no doubt that, under God, you might be the instrument of bringing many souls to Christ; and be the founder of the first branch of the Presbyterian church in St. Louis."

By letters since received, it appears that Mr. Flint arrived at St. Louis with his family in May, where he continued, preaching and instructing a school, till September, when he removed to St. Charles, a town about 20 miles north west of St. Louis, on the Missouri. In his last letter, he mentions that he proposed to establish his family at St. Charles, and preach there, and at several other settlements in that vicinity.*

From the foregoing facts, it will be seen that our Missionaries have traversed a vast extent of country, and preached the Gospel, probably, to hundreds of thousands of our fellow sinners, who otherwise would not have heard the blessed sound.

Will any say, What need of all this? Could not the Lord convert, comfort, and save souls, without all this labor, and toil, and expense? Yes, if he saw fit. And so he could have converted, in the first age of Christianity, the myriads that were brought to Christ, in the various provinces of the Roman empire, without the labors of Paul and his fellow Apostles. But this was not his plan. The Lord brings his purposes to pass by means. He has appointed the means by which he will save sinners. And it is in the use of means that we are to expect his blessing. While it is true that Christ is a "Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel;" it is equally true that he hath appointed his ministers to bear his message, and to be his witnesses, "both in Jerusalem and in Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." The Gospel is to shine upon all lands, and eventually to enlighten the whole globe. This is the plan and promise of God. But in accomplishing this, men are to take an active part; they are to be active instruments in the hand of God.

The Trustees are happy in the belief, that the good people of Connecticut will rejoice with them, that the Lord appears to be extending his kingdom, enlarging his church, and building up Jerusalem. Yea, it is a cheering and animating consideration, that while some of the precious friends of Jesus have been strengthened, nourished, and led to increased joy in the Lord; probably, not a few, by the same means, have been brought out of spiritual darkness, into the light and liberty of the Gospel and kingdom of Christ.

The Lord is doing a marvellous work in the day in which we live. The gospel is spreading over the dark regions of the globe. The Bible is making its way to the heathen tribes of the earth. The Christian world is alive to the importance of sending the bread of life to the starving and perishing millions of the human race. The darkness of paganism is receding before the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, *with healing in his wings*. These things, it is thought, manifest the dawning of that blessed day so much the subject of prophecy.

Blessed is he that saves a soul from death! Blessed is he who is instrumental of sending the Gospel to the destitute! Every exertion of the kind, by the friends of Christ, is helping forward the Lord's work, and aiding the advancement of the blessed epoch, when "The

* Several other Missionaries have labored in the service of the Society, in the course of the year, whose journals were not received in season for insertion in this Narrative. A particular account of their labors will be published next year.

earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;" and when,

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journies run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more."

JONATHAN BRACE, *Chairman.*

Passed by the Board of }
Trustees, Jan. 2, 1817. }

Attest, ABEL FLINT, *Secretary.*

Abstract of the Receipts and Expenditures of the Connecticut Missionary Society for the year 1816.

RECEIPTS.

Avails of the annual contribution in May through the whole state,	-	\$3,473 64
Amount of contributions in the new settlements,	-	601 10
Donation from Benj. Beecher, of Cheshire,	-	150 00
From Societies and individuals,	-	144 16
Avails of books sold,	-	4 12
Interest and income of stock,	-	1,646 29

\$6,019 32

EXPENDITURES.

Paid to thirty missionaries, employed by the Society to labor in Ohio, New York, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Vermont, Indiana, and Missouri Territory,	-	\$5,466 32
Salaries of the Treasurer and Secretary,	-	200 00
Books, transportation, and rent of depository,	-	264 68
Taxes on land belonging to the Society in Ohio,	-	20 99
Printing, stationary, postage, &c.	-	117 98

\$6,070 05

The balance in the hands of the Treasurer, all belonging to the permanent fund, is \$31,583 65.

Some donations were made to the Society in books, and above 5,000 books and tracts were distributed by the Society during the year. The whole number of books and tracts distributed by the Society is almost 36,000, including many Bibles, and other bound volumes.

AMERICAN MISSIONARIES.

Extracts from a letter, written by Messrs. Newell and Hall to the Rev. Dr. Worcester, dated May 3, 1816.

[After stating the disappointments they had experienced, in not receiving letters sent from this country during the war, and various particulars relative to the communications which they had previously made, the writers observe, that they had recently received the letters sent out by the missionaries to Ceylon, Oct. 1815. Extracts follow:]

"THE arrangements made by the Board, and communicated in your letter of October, are perfectly agreeable to us; and the system you have directed us to adopt will go into operation from the commencement of the present month.

"We received information of the arrival of our brethren in Ceylon about a fortnight since. They are kindly received, and have assurance of the favor and protection of His Excellency Sir Robert Brownrigg, the Governor. We have advised, that three of them should immediately fix on the Tamul language, as that in which they are to preach the Gospel to the heathen; leaving it for Providence

hereafter to determine, whether they shall continue in Ceylon, or labor on the neighboring peninsula, where the same language is spoken by seven or eight millions of people. We have also recommended, that the other two, (brother Bardwell, from his knowledge of printing, to be one of them,) should come, as soon as possible, to Bombay, to strengthen the mission here. It is by no means certain, however, that they will be allowed to stay here. All we can say is, that we consider it of so much importance to have our number here increased, and particularly that there should be one or two females in the mission, that we thought it expedient to recommend the measure abovementioned. If it succeeds, we shall greatly rejoice; if it fails, our brethren, we have no doubt, will be allowed to return to Ceylon. If you have received our last letter, you have learnt, that about six months ago the Governor, having received communications from the Court of Directors, which authorized him to act his own pleasure respecting our remaining here, immediately gave us his full and cordial permission to remain and pursue the work of our mission, wishing us much success in it. This gives us strong grounds to hope, that he will be favorable to our brethren.

"We rejoice to hear, that you approve of our plan of schooling. By the enclosed letter you will see the present state of our schools. We cannot now enlarge on that subject."

"On account of circumstances, detailed in our journal, our preaching in English has been suspended. We may think it expedient, perhaps, to resume it again in a change of circumstances. Preaching the Gospel to the heathen, in their own language, which we consider as our great and principal work, is continued regularly every day. The manner of our preaching to the heathen you will be able to learn from a private communication of Mr. Hall's forwarded last week by way of Calcutta." [This communication was published in the two last numbers of the Panoplist.]

"Respecting the subject of translating, we beg leave to refer to the enclosed letter. We have already informed you, that the Bible Society here have requested Dr. Taylor to translate the Gospel of Matthew into Guzerattee and Mahratta.

"In a former letter, we mentioned that we consider it very desirable that there should be a Mahratta printing press in this place. There is at present no press nearer than Bengal, at which printing can be executed in the character which is most familiar to the Mahratta people, and in which, we think, all religious books, designed for that people, should be printed. There is not, so far as we know, any part of the Sacred Scriptures extant in the Mahratta language in the character in which the Mahratta books are almost universally written; and which, of course, seems to be the proper character in which the Bible should be presented to the people. The communication by water, between this place and Calcutta, is more difficult than between Boston and London. You will therefore easily perceive how inconvenient it must be for us to be dependent on a press in Bengal for the printing of every tract, Gospel, or school-book, which we may want for immediate use. We have written to our brethren at Serampore, to ascertain whether they would furnish us with a fount of Nagree types, but we have not received any answer. They have the moulds and punches, and could probably afford us the types at a quarter of the expense of getting new punches made. We hope for an early communication from you on this subject, which is of the first im-

portance to the mission in this place. We forgot to mention in our last, that in October we sent to London for a number of books, to the amount of about 30%. which we wanted very much for immediate use. Mr. Nesbit, the bookseller, will probably draw on Mr. Evarts.

"The mission lately established at Surat is prospering. Mr. Fyvie, one of the missionaries there, was visited a few months since with a severe illness, which rendered it necessary for him to leave Surat for a season. He and Mrs. F. were with us about two months. Mr. F. is now perfectly recovered, and has returned to his station. Brother and sister Judson were well, the last time we heard from them. We have not heard from brother Nott since his departure in October last.

"The long expected arrival of our dear brethren and sisters in Ceylon has greatly rejoiced our hearts, and given renewed occasion to bless the Lord for all his mercies to us, and to our beloved patrons at home. We remain, reverend and dear sir, yours very affectionately,

G. HALL, S. NEWELL."

The following extracts are from another letter to the Rev. Dr. Worcester, received by the same conveyance, and dated May 25, 1816.

"On the 7th inst we were happy in receiving a very friendly letter from the Rev. Mr. Thomason, saying, that we could be furnished with the types in *Calcutta* for twelve hundred rupees; that they could be prepared in three months; and that he should be happy in procuring them for us: also adding, "I agree with you in the expediency of your having a press of your own. Without a printing establishment no missionary proceedings can prosper greatly."

"The expense of the types was much less than we expected, and we thought that we ought to lose no time in getting them in readiness. Accordingly, we wrote the next day to Mr. Thomason, desiring that the types might be prepared and sent to us as soon as practicable; and that the expense of them should be taken out of the next remittance that arrives for us in *Calcutta*. We expect the press will be ready for printing by the end of the year, and that the whole expense of it will be about two thousand rupees. We shall immediately begin to print one of the Gospels, probably Luke. It will fill about 100 pages 8vo. The paper for 1000 copies will cost a little more than 200 rupees. When one of the Gospels is printed, we shall probably proceed immediately to print the Acts, and afterwards some Scripture and other tracts, &c. But we shall find a difficulty in procuring paper. The quantity brought to this country is not great; nor is it proper *printing* paper; and it is in general very dear. It therefore appears expedient to us, that the Board should immediately send out a quantity of paper from America, or (which would probably be the most expeditious and the least expensive way,) that they should order a quantity to be sent directly from England to Bombay for us. The quantity which we would propose to have sent in the first instance, would be 100 reams. If we should not be in immediate want of so great a quantity, it would be needed in a short time, and there would probably be a saving in sending the same quantity at once, rather than at different times.

"We deem it of great importance that the paper should be of a good quality. There is a plenty of country paper, which we might get cheap; and thus we might make the things which we print *cheap*. But we think, that already time and money enough have been injudi-

ciously spent, by printing the Scriptures on paper so bad as to render the impression in many places quite illegible, and of course useless. The ignorance and the indolence of the heathen; their indifference to all religions but their own; their being unaccustomed to reading, especially a printed character; the hostility of their own moral sentiments and feelings to the religion of the Gospel; and the constant allusion in the latter to things of which they are entirely ignorant; are great and unavoidable difficulties in the way of their reading and understanding the Scriptures, when put into their hands. If to all this is added a vexatious difficulty in *reading*, arising from the badness of paper and printing, what good can be expected?"

"In our letters for a year past, we have repeatedly expressed our desire and intention, should our lives be spared, of translating and printing the whole Bible in the Mahratta language. We are aware, that it will, of course, be asked, why we undertake this great and expensive work, since it is well known, that the Bible has already been *translated*, and the greater part of it *printed*, in this language? We have before given the substance of our reasons. They appear to us very obvious.

"We are in the midst of the people who speak this language. We daily read their books in it. We *hear them speak* it; and we *daily preach* in it to the people. Under such circumstances, allowing us to be men of ordinary capacities and attainments, must we not be able to make a better translation than can possibly be made in a place far removed from the country where the language is vernacular, and by persons, who never saw the people that speak it? Again; the *study* and *use* of this *one* language is to be the main business of every day of our lives. We think it most obviously our duty to undertake the *translation* of the Bible.

"For similar reasons, we think it manifest that the *printing* should be done in the country where the language is spoken, and under the eye of the translator, rather than in a foreign country, far removed from the translator. How absurd it would be to suppose, that the Scriptures, in all the languages of Europe, should be printed nowhere but in London! But in some respects, it would be still more absurd to suppose, that the Scriptures, in all the various languages of India, should be printed in one place only. The prolix and intricate alphabets of these languages, and their numerous and critical vowel marks, points, &c. upon which correctness and perspicuity materially depend, present difficulties which have no parallel, in European languages. Without the most patient, laborious and critical attention to the printing in all its stages, a correct version of the Scriptures cannot reasonably be expected.

"The Board will probably think it proper, that the *expense* of setting up the press and of translating and printing the Scriptures, should be defrayed out of that part of their funds, mentioned in the seventh section of the act of their incorporation.

"We suppose that our brethren at Ceylon will find it expedient soon to reprint some detached parts of the Tamul Scriptures, in small portions for distribution. They probably will not think it expedient, in the first instance, to have a printing establishment of their own; since there are already several presses at work in Ceylon; and since there is an entire and able version of the Scriptures in print.

"It is impossible, at present, to make an accurate estimation of the sums which may be needed for these objects; but so far as we can judge, that part of the funds of the Board just alluded to will cover all expenses of this nature, which we and the other missionaries of the Board may incur for some time to come.

"We wish that the printing press, which the Board have at their disposal, may be sent to us by the earliest opportunity. We shall doubtless have important use for it. We earnestly hope that *more missionaries will come with it.*

"Such, dear Sir, is the letter which we had prepared to send you, when we were informed that an American ship had arrived. One of us went immediately on board, and found it to be the *Fawn*, Capt. Austin. We are unable to express our joy at the invaluable things which she has brought us. All the letters, books, pamphlets, &c. are before us. We have hardly had time to glance at them. But we see abundant cause for the greatest thankfulness and praise to God for the glorious manner in which he is carrying forward the cause of his dear Son, in our native land. We feel under high obligations to the Board for the great solicitude for our personal peace and comfort, and for the prosperity of our mission, which they continue to evince. It affords us great satisfaction to learn, that our missionary views receive the approbation of the Board. Our hands are strengthened and our hearts are encouraged. If we may but obtain grace to be humble and faithful in the service of our Lord and Master we would desire no more. It is a great mercy from God, that we are the subjects of the prayers of so many Christians in our native land. But we are sensible that this will profit us but little, unless we are men of prayer ourselves. May this grace be given us.

"We send you this letter as we had previously prepared it. It may perhaps be interesting to you rather than otherwise, to see what our minds were upon at the moment when your communications came to hand. The packet for England, by which this is to go, closes to-day. We send but this one letter by it, because we expect to write again to the Board, to Mr. Evarts, and to our private friends, by the *Fawn*. We shall endeavour to make our communications full.

"We remain, dear Sir, with great affection and respect, your brethren and fellow servants in the Gospel,

GORDON HALL,
SAMUEL NEWELL.

LETTER FROM GOVERNOR BROWNRIGG.

The following letter from his Excellency General Brownrigg, Governor of Ceylon, has recently been received by the Rev. Dr. Worcester. The very friendly manner, in which his Excellency welcomed the American missionaries, entitles him to the thanks of the Christian public.

King's house, Columbo, 16 June, 1816.

SIR,—Your letter communicating the thanks of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, in consequence of my reception of the Rev. Samuel Newell, and recommending five other missionaries to my notice, was lately delivered to me, by those gentlemen, on their arrival at this place.

To protect and encourage, as far as lies in my power, those who devote themselves to the propagation of Christianity, is so grateful a part of my duty, that I cannot lay claim to any merit for a service to which I am prompted by my own inclination. Yet I confess, that the mark of approbation from the Commissioners, announced in your letter, has given me great pleasure; and I beg you will convey to the gentlemen, who compose that Board, my sincere acknowledgments of their kind and flattering attention.

When Mr. Newell was in this island, I was a good deal embarrassed by the relative state of our countries, then unfortunately at war. The Peace which has happily been since restored, will, I hope, long remain, and remove every obstacle from the way of those who come so far to preach the Gospel of Peace.

I have read with much satisfaction the judicious instructions of your Board, wherein religious zeal is tempered with sound discretion. If your missionaries conduct themselves according to the course that is there so distinctly marked out, their success will not be doubtful.

They have just received my permission to establish themselves in Jaffna the northern Province of this Island; where, in their opinion, the fairest field is open for their labors; and I beg you will assure the Commissioners of my strong desire to do every thing to promote their Christian views, in all that is consistent with the safety and tranquillity of his Majesty's Colony of Ceylon.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient, and humble servant,

ROBERT BROWNRIGG.

The Rev. Samuel Worcester, D.D.
Cor. Sec. of the Am. &c.

DONATIONS TO THE AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Feb. 18, 1817. From the Female Charitable Society in Essex, (Ver.) by the Rev. Asaph Morgan, it being part of the last year's subscription,	\$9 00	
From a friend to the heathen,	1 00	10 00
From the Rev. Leonard Worcester, of Peacham, (Ver.) a contribution of the females of his Society, in aid of translating and publishing the Scriptures,		15 86
20. From the Rev. Thomas Williams, of Foxboro' contributed at the monthly prayer-meeting, Feb. 3, 1817,		9 00
From a Female in Northwood, (N.H.) remitted by the Rev. Dr. M'Farland,		2 00
25. From Mrs. Cram, given as a dying tribute to religion,		20 00
27. From the Foreign Mission Society of Litchfield County, by Uriel Holmes, Esq. Treasurer,		719 21
28. From a female friend of missions in Deerfield, (N.H.) by the Rev. Abraham Burnham,		50
From a Society of Females in Lebanon, (Con.) by the Rev. S. P. Williams, of Mansfield,		50 00
		<u>\$826 57</u>

THE SCHOOL FUND.

Feb. 18, 1817. From two females, by the Rev. Asaph Morgan, of Essex, (Ver.)	50	
From a lad, out of his own earnings, by do.	1 00	
From six other children, who attended a Sunday-school,	1 50	3 00
21. A contribution in the West Parish of Amesbury, by the Rev. Samuel Mead,		10 50
24. From Mr. Burgess, of Washington, (Conn.) by the Rev. Amos Pettengill, for the Owbyhean Youths,	5 00	
From Dr. Hawley, of Austinburgh, Ohio, for do.	5 00	10 00
25. From a little girl,		30
27. From the following sources, for educating heathen children at Bombay, by U. Holmes, Esq. viz.		
From the Gentlemen and Ladies' Association in Canaan,	20 19	
Female Association in Harwinton,	12 73	
Gentlemen's in do.	13 17	
Female Association in Kent,	13 36	
Gentlemen's in do.	14 75	74 20
28. From a pious lady in Lebanon, (Con.) by the Rev. S. P. Williams, of Mansfield,		10 00
Received by Mr. Elias Cornelius, an agent of the Board, for the support of schools among the Cherokee Indians; viz.		
In donations from individuals, and contributions after sermon, in the following places; viz. New Bedford, (Mass.)	104 59	
Newport, (R. I.)	30 20	
Bristol, (do.)	101 17	
Carried forward,	\$235 96	\$108 20

	Brought forward,	\$235 96	\$108 20
Providence, (do.)	-	219 95	
Norwich, (Con.)	-	68 30	
New London, (do.)	-	93 12	
Middletown, (do.)	-	82 04	
Wethersfield, first Society,	-	33 57	
Stepney,	-	17 59	
Hartford,	-	292 29	
Mrs. G. and daughter of Berlin,	-	1 00	1,043 80
Received by Mr. Cornelius for William Kamora, the Owhyhean youth, who arrived latest in this country; viz. From Ladies in Providence,	-	5 90	
From a school of females in Franklin, (Con.)	-	3 04	
From a young man in Hartford,	-	3 00	11 94
			<hr/>
			1,163 94
	Add other donations,		826 57
			<hr/>
			\$1,990 51

REVIVAL OF RELIGION AT NEWARK, (N. J.)

A LETTER to the Editor from the Rev. Dr. Richards, dated the 7th inst. contains the following intelligence, respecting the present great revival at Newark.

"The God of our salvation is working wonders in this town. A revival of religion, which commenced about the middle of December last, is going forward with great strength. Christians have been searched, humbled, and made to sing of love and mercy, as in the days of their espousals. Between three and four hundred are under impressions, and asking the way to Zion. About one hundred and twenty, among the people of my charge, have already obtained hope; and they include persons of all descriptions and ages. The work is now general through the town; and a prospect of large accessions to the several churches animates the friends of the Redeemer."

Dr. Richards enclosed *one hundred dollars* for the school fund, as a donation from an individual to the cause of religion, and "as an evidence that Christ has really taken possession of the heart."

We learn from other sources, that the revival has extended to many congregations in the vicinity of Newark.

INSTALLATION.

INSTALLED, at Barrington, (R.I.) on the 29th of January last, the Rev. LUTHER WRIGHT, over the church and congregational society in that town. Introductory prayer by the Rev. Elisha Fisk, of Wrentham; sermon from Ex. xvii, 11 & 12, by the Rev. Thomas Noyes, of Needham; installing prayer by the Rev. Professor Park, of Providence; charge to the pastor by Rev. Henry Wight, of Bristol, (R.I.) charge to the church and people by the Rev. Joshua Bates, of Dedham; right hand of fellowship by the Rev. Joel Mann, of Bristol, (R.I.) and concluding prayer by the Rev. Jacob Ide, of Medway. The weather was fair and pleasant; and the exercises, performed in the presence of a crowded and attentive assembly, were peculiarly solemn, impressive, and appropriate.

The preceding installation was barely mentioned in our last number. We have since been requested to publish particulars.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

OBITUARY notices of ABEL BOYNTON, Esq. and Mrs. ELDRIDGE have been received. The insertion of them is necessarily deferred. It will probably be judged advisable to abridge them both, by omitting some of the less important parts.

Several other obituary notices will be attended to as early as possible.

Letters have been received from Messrs. Hall and Newell, at Bombay, dated Sept. 30. These brethren were in expectation of being joined by Mr. Bardwell from Ceylon, and were proceeding regularly in their various labors.

The friends of the missionaries in Ceylon have received letters from them, dated June 20th. Mr. Bardwell had concluded to join the mission at Bombay, and the other four brethren had obtained leave to settle in Jaffna, where they contemplated forming two missionary stations. Extracts from these letters will appear in our next number.